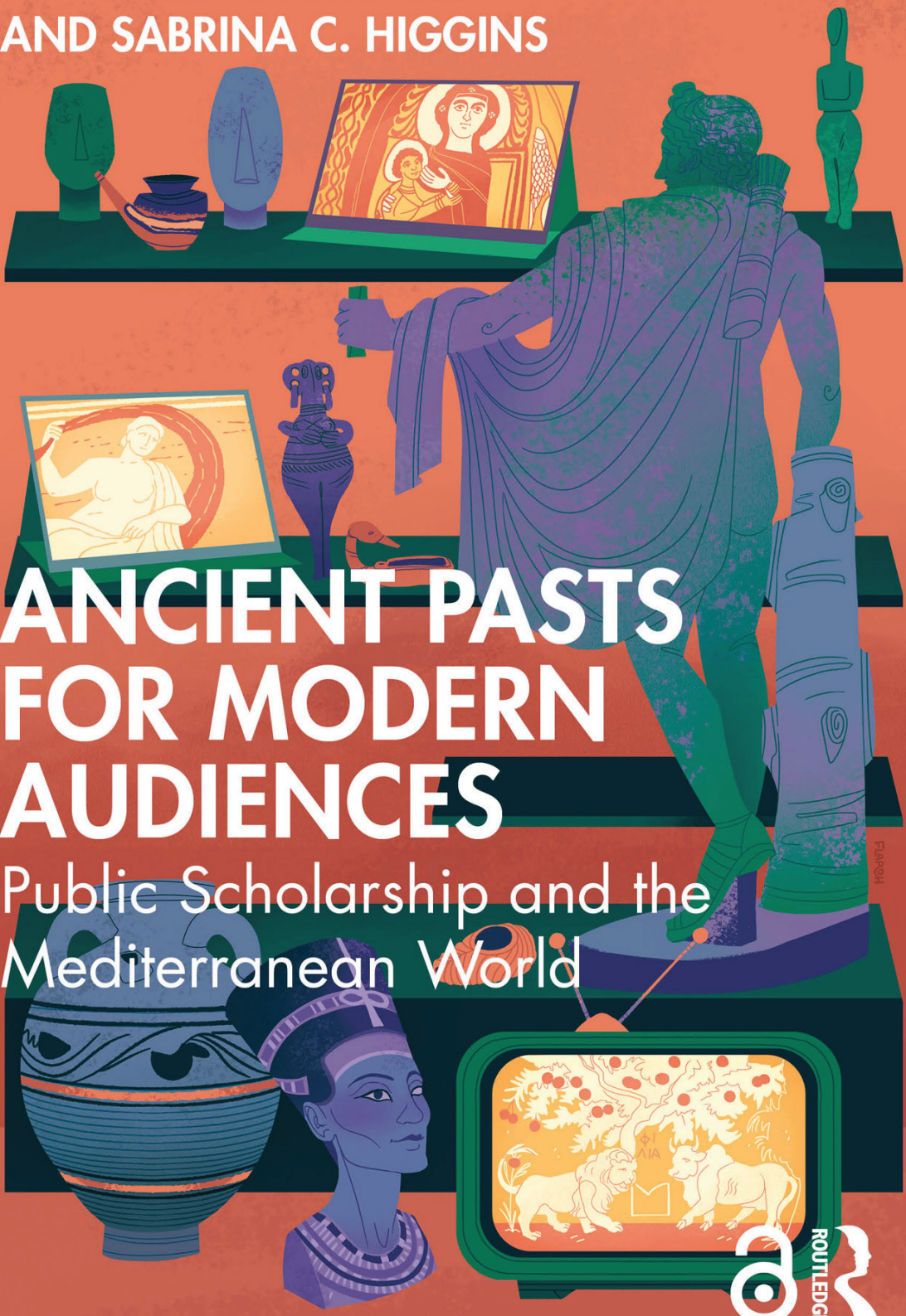
EDITED BY CHELSEA A.M. GARDNER AND SABRINA C. HIGGINS



ANCIENT PASTS FOR MODERN AUDIENCES

Public Scholarship and the Mediterranean World

ROUTLEDGE

ANCIENT PASTS FOR MODERN AUDIENCES

This volume brings together specialists from a broad demographic and professional range – academics, museum curators, students, and content creators – to discuss case studies, challenges, and potential future avenues for public scholarship on the history, archaeology, and cultures of the ancient Mediterranean, North Africa, and Western Asia.

Together, the contributions promote the creation of inclusive methods of knowledge mobilisation and communication in public spheres across three main areas: cultural heritage, pedagogy, and public-facing scholarship. These areas have all been directly affected by Eurocentric structures that have claimed ownership of ancient Mediterranean cultural heritage and have dictated how it has been taught in schools and communicated to the broader public. The volume is divided into three sections – Museums, Teaching and Learning, and Global and Local Projects – each addressing pressing challenges faced within these interrelated fields and offering ways for us to overcome the exclusionary narratives that plague them.

Ancient Pasts for Modern Audiences provides an invaluable resource for those interested in public history, from academics to lay audiences, in the fields of Ancient Mediterranean, North African, and Western Asian Studies. The book also appeals to professionals and researchers whose interests lie in public-facing scholarship, pedagogy, digital humanities, decolonisation studies, museum studies, and popular media.

Chelsea A.M. Gardner is Associate Professor in the Department of History and Classics at Acadia University. She is an archaeologist working in the Mani Peninsula in southern Greece, where she is the director of the CARTography Project and the Southern Mani Archaeological Project.

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ANCIENT PASTS FOR MODERN AUDIENCES

Public Scholarship and the Mediterranean World

Edited by Chelsea A.M. Gardner and Sabrina C. Higgins

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CONTENTS

List of Figures *viii*
Preface *xiii*
Contributors *xvi*

Introduction: Our Collective Responsibility to the Future of the Ancient Past 1
Sabrina C. Higgins and Chelsea A.M. Gardner

SECTION 1
MUSEUMS **13**

1 I Will Believe in Art When It Is Made for the People: Teaching with Greco-Roman Copies in Santiago 15
Frances Gallart Marqués

2 The Unwavering Divide: Collection and Display Practices of Ancient and Medieval African Collections 34
Annissa Malvoisin

3 Respect, Recognition, and Rematriation: An Indigenous Egyptian Perspective on Meaningful Public Discourse on the Middle East and North Africa 57
Heba Abd el-Gawad

4 Indigenising as Anti-Classical? Locating Indigenous Classicisms in and Beyond Museum Frameworks 74
Kendall Lovely

5 Densities of Provenancing: Narrating the Colonial Provenance of the Bay View Collection at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology 92
Ashton Rodgers

SECTION 2
TEACHING/LEARNING 107

6 The Peopling the Past Project: Multivocality and Multimodality in Ancient Mediterranean Studies Teaching 109
Christine L. Johnston, Sabrina C. Higgins, Megan Daniels, and Victoria Austen

7 Back to Basics: Illuminating the Hidden Curriculum and BIPOC Scholars to Promote a More Diverse and Equitable Field 129
Nadhira Hill

8 The Lux Project: Using Small-Scale Public Scholarship to Reach Local Audiences 148
Melissa Funke, Colton Van Gerwen, Kira Lang, and Bourke Karras

9 Teaching the Ancient World with Reproductions: Using 3D Printed Objects in Authentic Active History Learning 166
Christine L. Johnston, Alan Wheeler, Alexis Nunn, and Erin Escobar

10 Research-Driven Pedagogy and Public-Facing Outcomes: The Antioch Recovery Project 201
Ella Gonzalez, Danielle Ortiz, and Jennifer Stager

SECTION 3
PUBLIC PROJECTS, LOCAL AND GLOBAL 229

11 Wiki Education, the Ancient Mediterranean Classroom, and the Production of Global Knowledge 231
Chelsea A.M. Gardner and Victoria Austen

12 Lasting Impressions: Archaeology and Community Engagement in the Xeros River Valley (Cyprus) 251
Francesco Ripanti, Giorgos Papantoniou, Athanasios Vionis, and Andreas Lanitis

13 The Database of Religious History and Responsible Global Scholarship 275
Gino Canlas, Julian Weidemann, Andrew Danielson, Ian Randall, and M. Willis Monroe

14 Reimagining the Digital Mary Project as a Counter-Practice within/against the Neoliberal University 290
Sabrina C. Higgins, Aurora E. Camaño, and Michael R. Laurence

15 Public Humanities and the Ancient Mediterranean: A Conversation with Liv Albert of the *Let's Talk about Myths, Baby!* Podcast, Flora Kirk of *Flaroh Illustration*, and Megan Lewis of *Digital Hammurabi* 307
Melissa Funke, Liv Albert, Flora Kirk, and Megan Lewis

Index *319*

FIGURES

1.1 Graffiti on the exterior of the MNBA. Photo by Benjamín Matte V 16

1.2 The main hall of the MNBA ca. 1911. Photo courtesy of the Ministerio de Obras Públicas, Dirección de Arquitectura, Archivo Fotográfico, Santiago, Chile 20

1.3 Nicanor Plaza's "El jugador de palin" (1880), left; Francisco Maturana's mural at Mosqueto 456, Santiago, "Jugador de palin" (2018), right. Photos courtesy of the Departamento de Comunicaciones, MNBA, with permission from Francisco Maturana 24

1.4 A group of teachers practices "slow looking" with the MNBA's marble copy of the "Apollo Belvedere." Photo courtesy of the Departamento de Comunicaciones, MNBA 26

1.5 AME members Constanza Nilo and Mariana Vadell working with children in the "Patio de la Paulonia." Photo by Matías Cornejo 28

2.1 Interdisciplinarity (firm borders, shared concepts and methods; adapted from Darian-Smith and McCarty 2016, 5) 44

2.2 Transdisciplinarity (absence of borders, fluid, new frameworks; adapted from Scholz and Steiner 2015a, 529 and 534) 45

6.1 Fink's Taxonomy of Significant Learning (adapted from Fink 2003a, 30) 112

6.2 The Continuum of Media Richness (adapted from Bates 2015, 242) 113
6.3 Information processing according to the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (adapted from Mayer 2009, 61, fig. 3.1) 113
8.1 Letter to the Registrar of Wesley College (1903). Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society 151
8.2 Student Volunteers Photographing the Hetherington Collection, University of Winnipeg 155
8.3 Colton Van Gerwen (undergraduate volunteer) at Harrow School, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada 157
8.4 Shabti made by grade 3 student at Harrow School, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada 158
9.1 Left and Centre: Jasper Heart Scarab, Durham University Oriental Museum inv. EG5270 (Northumberland Collection; image reproduced courtesy of the Durham University); Right: model by Cole Kelly for Durham University (Sketchfab: https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/heart-scarab-3252dbf0af2b4d5c8a58797eec2a8102) 173
9.2 Left: Cycladic Marble Head, ca. 2700–2500 BCE (Met. Museum inv. 64.246, public domain); Right: 3D print reproduced from the model made by Scan the World (https://www.myminifactory.com/object/3d-print-head-of-a-woman-28673) 175
9.3 3D Model of a Plastiras Type Cycladic Figurine, ca. 3000–2800 BCE (model by the British Museum, SketchFab: https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/cycladic-figurine-948a37048c3548e29f3ac0a807813418, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0; based on British Museum inv. 1890,0921.5) 176
9.4 3D Print of the Bust of Nefertiti reproduced from the model by Scan the World (https://www.myminifactory.com/object/3d-print-bust-of-nefertiti-at-the-egyptian-museum-berlin-2951) 178
10.1 Map of Antakya, Türkiye and its surroundings. Esri ArcGIS 202
10.2 Excavation view of mosaic floors *in situ*, House of Cilicia and surroundings, Antioch (Antakya Türkiye). August 28, 1937. A-006385. Courtesy of the Antioch Expedition Archive, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University 203

10.3 Angela Elliott speaking in front of a mosaic fragment depicting the Abduction of Europa from the House of the Boat of Psyches, installed on the wall of the Antioch Court, Baltimore Museum of Art, 2021 205
10.4 Map of the movement of mosaic fragments from the House of the Boat of Psyches, distributed to five different institutions in Antakya, Paris, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Princeton. Courtesy: Phoebe Chu and the Antioch Recovery Project 207
10.5 Still of image slider allowing movement between a photograph of the mosaic fragment of the Abduction of Europa as it now appears, and an earlier photograph taken before conservation. November 17, 2021. Courtesy: Phoebe Chu, the Antioch Recovery Project, and the Princeton Archaeological Archives 209
10.6 Antioch Mosaics Distribution Map. Created in ArcGIS by Ella Gonzalez and Maya Kahane in 2020 and continuously updated by members of The Antioch Recovery Project 213
10.7 Excavation view of central mosaic panel in Room B5 with large octagon, House of the Buffet Supper; July 8, 1937; Mosaic a962-M122a-e. Courtesy of the Antioch Expedition Archive, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University 214
10.8 Danielle Ortiz standing in front of a mosaic fragment from the Hall of Philia that depicts a lion, a humped ox, and the ancient Greek word *philia*, 2021. Baltimore Museum of Art 217
10.9 Fragment of a mosaic floor from the Hall of Philia that depicts a lion and stag, and a bear on the wall of a stairwell in the Baltimore Museum of Art, 2021 218
10.10 Fragment of a mosaic floor from the Hall of Philia that depicts a tiger and a goat, installed on the wall of a stairwell in the Baltimore Museum of Art, with a modern installation in the left foreground, 2021 219
10.11 Digital visualisation of the mosaic fragments from the Hall of Philia fitted back together as a floor. Danielle Ortiz 220
11.1 Wikipedia pages ranked 1–10 in popularity of interest to the WikiProject "Classical Greece and Rome." Retrieved June 2024 235
11.2 Wikipedia pages ranked 11–25 in popularity of interest to the WikiProject "Classical Greece and Rome." Retrieved June 2024 236

11.3 Example: Wiki Education dashboard from Victoria Austen's 2021 "Roman Britain" class. Retrieved July 2023. A Wiki Education dashboard is automatically generated for each class and remains adjustable throughout the duration of the class 238
11.4 Example of Wiki Education training and assignments from Victoria Austen's 2021 "Roman Britain" class. Retrieved July 2023. Other potential training modules include "Thinking about sources and plagiarism"; "Compile a brief annotated bibliography"; and "Evaluating articles and sources." 239
12.1 Map with the suggested UnSaLa-CY app cultural route in the Xeros River valley 257
12.2 A screenshot from the UnSaLa-CY app showcasing the Augmented Reality rendition of the Byzantine Village of Kophinou (above), which also includes ten POIs of the tour proposed on the app, with the contents available for each site (below) 258
12.3 QR code at Alaminos Medieval Tower House linking to corresponding POI on the app. Photo: Giorgos Papantoniou 259
12.4 (a) The most cited codes in the codebook related to the open answer "Did you encounter any difficulties while using the app, or notice any bugs?" (n = 19). (b) The most cited codes in the codebook related to the open answer "Please add comments or suggestions related to the application" (n = 30). (c) Answer to the question "Which do you think is the best method of getting information about the area you visited? Please, rate the following from the most [1] to the least useful [4]" (n = 46) 262
12.5 Flyers from Archaeology Days (above) and the 'ΑρχαιοΛογικά' programme (below) 265
13.1 The landing page of the Database of Religious History website (as of October 2023) 276
13.2 The contextual information at the beginning of a published DRH entry (image: an entry on "Tainaron" by Peopling the Past's Chelsea Gardner, 2021) 280
13.3 An example of using the Visualise tool within the DRH, testing the query "A supreme high god is present" in the Mediterranean and the Near East 281
13.4 A global heatmap of users of the DRH over the past year, according to the DRH's Google Analytics page 283

13.5 A comment in Arabic (a currently unsupported language in the DRH) in a "poll" entry written by Bou Ali Malika (2023) 285
15.1 Mock up of a book cover for Homer's *Iliad*, digital art by Flora Kirk 310

PREFACE

In her formative volume, *Practising Public Scholarship: Experiences and Possibilities Beyond the Academy*, Katharyne Mitchell argued that the spirit of public scholarship should aim to break down barriers between the academy and the broader public and, when executed responsibly, has the ability to expand inclusion and diversity.[1] Yet, what does it mean to engage in and produce "responsible" public scholarship? How can we – as educators inside and outside the academy – more effectively contribute to public discourse about the ancient Mediterranean that is more inclusive of past diversity and modern audiences, especially at a time when Classics, and its related disciplines, are actively confronting their colonial, extractive, and Eurocentric roots?

These questions were the driving force behind a colloquium held in Vancouver, British Columbia, in March 2023, entitled "Presenting the Past: Responsible Engagement and Ancient Mediterranean History." This colloquium, hosted by Peopling the Past and held jointly at the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University, sought to address these questions by bringing together a diverse network of knowledge creators and users, all of whom were actively working to break down barriers to diversity and inclusion in traditional ancient Mediterranean scholarship through various research, teaching, experiential, and public-facing initiatives.[2] The colloquium was generously funded through a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Connection Grant, the Stavros Niarchos Centre for Hellenic Studies and the Department of Global Humanities at Simon Fraser University, the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at Acadia University, Green College and the Department of Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies at the University of British Columbia, the Office of Research at the University of Winnipeg, and the American Research Center in Egypt – Vancouver

Chapter.[3] Twenty-seven participants presented on a variety of topics related to museums, cultural heritage, digital humanities, and pedagogy, and the colloquium also included an interview with "alt-ac" public scholars, a live podcast taping, and a lightning round featuring projects centred around public scholarship.

The success of the colloquium, and the critical and fruitful discussions that ensued after each paper, revealed the need for more substantial conversations about public scholarship on topics related to the ancient Mediterranean world; the present publication, therefore, represents our collective contribution to this discussion. Each participant in the colloquium was invited to contribute to this edited volume, and all but four individuals were able to participate.[4] In order to expand upon the demographics and areas of expertise represented by the contributors, we circulated a call for additional contributions to the volume by public scholars whose work focused on community-centred archaeology and/or indigeneity, with an aim to include authors whose positionalities lay outside of those traditionally represented in the fields of ancient Mediterranean studies. This final manuscript comprises 15 chapters and the tireless work of 35 individuals, all of whom are striving for responsible public scholarship in their own research, pedagogy, and community activities.

In the spirit of public scholarship, we also wanted to ensure that this volume, and the invaluable insights of our colleagues therein, were available to everyone free of charge. Thanks to the generosity of several institutions and funding bodies, including the Simon Fraser University Open Access Fund, the Stavros Niarchos Centre for Hellenic Studies at Simon Fraser University, the Research and Sponsored Programs Office and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Western Washington University, the UBC Open Access Fund for Humanities and Social Sciences Research, the Thomas N. Sizgorich Memorial Fund at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the John Templeton Foundation, we are thrilled to publish this volume Gold Open Access.[5] In doing so, we hope that anyone with an interest in public scholarship or the ancient Mediterranean can engage with the diverse perspectives in this volume and imagine new ways to conceive of themselves as responsible public scholars.

Notes

1 Mitchell 2008, 3–5.
2 Peopling the Past is a digital humanities initiative that hosts free, open-access resources for teaching and learning about real people in the ancient world and the people who study them: https://peoplingthepast.com/. The team comprises seven female scholars based in Canada and the United States, who are primarily white, cisgender, heterosexual settlers, and who collectively specialise in the art, archaeology, literature, and history of the ancient Mediterranean, North African, and West Asian worlds: Victoria Austen, Megan Daniels, Melissa Funke, Christine L. Johnston, Carolyn M. Laferrière, as well as the co-editors of this volume, Chelsea A.M. Gardner and Sabrina C. Higgins.

3 An additional note of thanks is owed to Lauren Gilbert, Heather Montgomery, Huyen Pham, Wallis Hartley, and Aurora E. Camaño, who were instrumental in the planning and execution of this colloquium.
4 We would like to thank Katherine Blouin (https://everydayorientalism.wordpress.com/), Kara Cooney (https://karacooney.squarespace.com/), Pınar Durgun (https://pinardurgunpd.wixsite.com/pinardurgun), and Kyle L. Jordan (https://curatingforchange.org/our-fellows-and-trainees/kyle-jordan/) for their contributions to the colloquium. While their work does not appear in the present volume, we encourage you to engage with their important public-facing scholarship.
5 We are also indebted to Aurora E. Camaño, Gino Canlas, Megan Daniels, Christine L. Johnston, Kendall Lovely, and M. Willis Monroe for their efforts to help us secure additional open-access funding.

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Liv Albert is one of the world's foremost podcasters in the realm of classical mythology. Her hit podcast examines the ancient world through a modern intersectional feminist lens, focusing where possible on amplifying the voices of women, trans, and non-binary people. She is also the author of the #1 New Release and Bestselling book *Greek Mythology: The Gods, Goddesses, and Heroes Handbook*, as well as a second book of myth-themed cocktails, *The Nectar of the Gods*. She's currently working on a mythologically inspired novel and children's books in the same realm.

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Erin Escobar graduated in 2020 with an MA in History at Western Washington University, where she studied the American commemoration of atrocity. Her research focuses on memorials/symbols/objects and their efficacy in telling accurate, complex, truthful, respectful histories. This research focus inspired her to participate in the Ancient World in 3D project, as she hopes to explore the ways in which adding tangible artefacts to lectures can clarify the meanings, uses, and import of objects, as well as to showcase the complexity, intricacy, and beauty or deterioration of objects. She also hopes to incorporate replica artefacts in order to help students to engage more fully with the past by using their senses of touch and sight in person, instead of only seeing images via projector or film. After completing her MA, she attended St. Mary's University in England to gain her certification to teach in secondary schools.

Melissa Funke is Assistant Professor of Classics at the University of Winnipeg and a member of the Ancient Love Letters research network at the University of Leeds. Her work focuses on dramatic performance (ancient and modern) as well as gender and status in classical antiquity, particularly as it is depicted in literature. She is the author of *Phryne: A Life in Fragments* (Bloomsbury), which traces the biographical tradition of the (in)famous Greek courtesan Phryne and examines the role of anecdote in fashioning literary-historical narratives. She also directs the Lux Project at the University of Winnipeg, which is an outreach project based on a collection of Roman-Egyptian artefacts that aims to make them accessible to both the local community and scholars around the world.

Frances Gallart Marqués is an archaeologist and art historian whose research interests include clay figurines and their haptic qualities, object-based learning, and

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Christine L. Johnston is Associate Professor of Ancient Mediterranean History at Western Washington University and Natural Environment Area Editor for the UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology. Her research centres on the cultures and history of the Ancient Mediterranean, West Asia, and North Africa, particularly on economic and environmental history. She employs historical, anthropological, and network methodology to examine political economy and exchange systems in the eastern Mediterranean, especially the roles of non-institutional actors and extra-palatial trade networks. In addition to the study of political economy, she is active in research on environmental and climate change in Ancient Egypt with colleagues from the University of British Columbia and co-edited a recent volume on Ancient Egypt and the Environment. She also engages in research on digital humanities, public history, and pedagogy, including projects on the use of 3D printed replicas in the classroom.

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Flora Kirk is a UK-based illustrator specialising in depictions of ancient Mediterranean civilisations. She creates art inspired by archaeology sites, ancient

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Annissa Malvoisin is the Associate Curator of Arts of Africa at the Brooklyn Museum and is Affiliated Faculty at the Bard Graduate Center: Decorative Arts, Design History, Material Culture. Malvoisin is a curator and scholar of ancient African history with research interests in a globalised ancient world through the study of material culture and trade and from the perspective of African regions. Her research focuses on inter-regional relationships between Nile Valley sites and neighbouring regions, specifically in Central and West Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Red Sea coast during the Meroitic period in Nubia (modern-day Egypt and Sudan). In addition to the Brooklyn Museum, she has worked on the collections of Global Africa and Egypt and Nubia at the Royal Ontario Museum and as a ceramicist for the Bioarchaeology of Nubia Expedition at Arizona State University. Her scholarship has been supported by the Ontario Graduate Scholarship, the American Alliance of Museums, the Association of Art Museum Curators, and the American Society of Overseas Research, among others. Previous curatorial projects include *Africa Fashion* and *Sakimatwemtwe: A Century of Reflection on the Arts of Africa* at the Brooklyn Museum.

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Alexis Nunn is a middle and high school history teacher. She earned her MA from Western Washington University in 2024, specialising in Medieval European History. In her classes, as well as with the Ancient World in 3D Project, she has worked to improve student engagement and student learning, focusing in particular on pedagogical strategies for introductory history courses.

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Ashton Rodgers is a PhD student at the University of Michigan in the Interdepartmental Program in Ancient Mediterranean Art and Archaeology (IPAMAA). Ashton earned her BA from the College of William and Mary (2021) and MA from the University of Michigan (2022), both in Classical Studies. She has worked as an intern at both the San Antonio Museum of Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her research interests centre around: colonialism and classics, intellectual histories and theorising of "Greek colonization" as well as the archaeology of Greek colonisation in Southern Italy, and decolonial provenance research, specifically with osteological museum collections. Ashton is particularly interested in operationalising decolonising and Indigenous research methodologies in her archaeological and museum work.

Jennifer Stager is writer and art historian in the Department of History of Art at Johns Hopkins University, where she is an assistant professor. She is the Principal Investigator of The Antioch recovery Project, the author of *Seeing Color in Classical Art: Theory, Practice, and Reception from Antiquity to the Present* (2022), and, with Leila Easa, *Public Feminism in Times of Crisis: From Sappho's Fragments to Viral Hashtags* (2022).

Colton Van Gerwen is a first-year Classics MA student at the University of Toronto and holds a Classics degree from the University of Winnipeg. His research focus is on Greek language and literature. Colton volunteered with the Lux Project: Digitizing the Hetherington Collection for three years and took part in many school outreach activities through the project.

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Alan Wheeler graduated with an MA in History from Western Washington University in 2024. His research interests include the development of the state and empire in the Ancient Near East, the role of donkeys in ancient economies, and the representation of the ancient world in media. His master's thesis examined the role Herodotus's Histories has played in furthering Orientalist tropes of Persian culture, including the ways the text has been interpreted today in movies and other aspects of popular culture. Alan is a co-founder of the Ancient World in 3D project with Dr

Christine Johnston and two other MA students at Western Washington University. As part of this project, Alan has been researching the ways in which 3D printed objects can help students engage with the ancient world. Alan's experience with the pedagogical use of material objects in active-learning modules will contribute to the article's themes of cultural heritage and responsible pedagogy.

Julian Weideman is Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of History at the University of Toronto. Previously, he was Postdoctoral Research Fellow with the Database of Religious History at the University of British Columbia. He studies the modern Middle East and North Africa in global perspective, with a focus on political economy, universities, Islamic thought, and colonialism. His articles have appeared in the *American Historical Review*, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, and *International Journal of Middle East Studies*.

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INTRODUCTION

Our Collective Responsibility to the Future of the Ancient Past

Sabrina C. Higgins and Chelsea A.M. Gardner

The study of Mediterranean antiquity and its traditional related disciplines (classics, egyptology, West Asian studies, classical archaeology, etc.) are no longer the sole domain of scholars hidden away within the ivory tower. Today, the ancient world is seemingly at our fingertips, available to us across a multitude of both virtual and physical spaces, including museums, archives, data repositories, 3D models, digital humanities projects, online courses, television, and social media; the enormity of this availability reflects the insatiable desire by various publics to consume information related to the ancient Mediterranean world. This omnipresent access to the ancient world has stemmed, in part, from a concerted effort by public scholars – including researchers, activists, hackers, communities, and creators alike – to make their work available to a wider audience by eliminating financial, institutional, and intellectual (i.e., copyright) barriers to access.[1] By removing such barriers and creating accessible avenues to engage with the ancient Mediterranean, public scholars are dismantling the structural inequities that have historically played a role in gatekeeping scholarly research from the general public.[2]

Yet, the general perception of the cultures and peoples who inhabited the ancient Mediterranean world is still largely shaped by material and popular culture, wherein objects and archaeological remains have pride of place in public consciousness, rather than the people who created, lived with, and used them.[3] In this traditional framework, materials are torn from their "lifeworlds" and disciplined into objects that exist for the gaze of the subject;[4] the "civilisational world heritage" of an object or structure is thus prioritised over its "multiple heritages"

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– that is, its co-cultural presences and simultaneous histories.[5] Such prioritisation has resulted in an overwhelming focus on "great" men, prized artifacts, and monumental buildings, obfuscating the multiple histories and experiences of everyday people and objects from the dominant narratives that are constructed about the ancient past. The disproportionate attention to these topics has left a lasting impact on the way in which we envision the ancient Mediterranean world, and has created a false perception of proprietorship over the ancient past; this latter point is especially important, as it refers to the narrow demographic (white, male, European) that has traditionally claimed the authority to tell these histories, and simultaneously, those who have been historically excluded from institutions, scholarship, and public discourse.

Ancient Mediterranean Studies: Legacies of Colonialism and "Responsible" Public Scholarship

The disciplines related to Mediterranean antiquity, broadly construed, remain "one of the most racially homogenous corners of the academy;[6] for example, "classics" has long been dominated by cisgendered white scholars from the Global North, whose education bears the legacies of European modernity and its colonial imperative – a project which situated the Greco-Roman world as the "universal" or "foundational" culture for an imagined and socially constructed "West."[7] For decades, however, scholars (especially minoritised individuals) have levelled critiques against the Eurocentrism that pervades our field(s), highlighting the deeply entangled racist and exclusionary agendas that emerge when we adopt a "civilisational world heritage" approach to antiquity. In doing so, these scholars have carried out the hard work of challenging the narrow and inflexible constraints that have long held our discipline(s) hostage, specifically by confronting the questions of who and what are worthy subjects of inquiry.[8]

Such criticisms, voiced by minoritised scholars, are essential to fully understanding the power relations, structures, and avenues of scholarship that have shaped our discipline, as well as the experiences of those who have confronted the status quo.[9] It is not, however, the sole responsibility of scholars from underrepresented demographic groups to effect change; rather, it is a role that we must all embark on if we are to "overturn the centuries of erasure that disciplines like classics have actively participated in."[10] If we are to make a lasting impact on the legacy of our discipline(s), public scholars – that is, researchers, teachers, and content creators who engage directly with the audiences outside of the academy – need to be at the forefront of this change by acknowledging "the role that Greek and Roman antiquity have played in constructing and authorizing racism, colonialism, nationalism, patriarchy, Western-centrism, body normativity, and other entrenched, violent social structures," and recognising that the way in which we communicate knowledge influences our audiences' perception of the ancient past.[11] In our opinion, therefore, a "responsible" public scholar must also

engage in decolonising and anti-racist work, which consists of deploying our platforms to "critique structures of power and to take reparative action with respect to epistemic injustice."[12] We, as public scholars, have a responsibility not only to interrogate the colonial and exclusionary history of our discipline but to engage in teaching and public-facing research in ways that centre multiple histories and voices, thereby actively working towards the creation of a more equitable and just presentation of our field. Responsible scholarship, in our view and reflected in the contributions of this volume, challenges the traditional hierarchical, exclusionary frameworks within the academy and invites a broader demographic for participation in knowledge creation.

In framing the role of public scholars as such, "responsible" public scholarship can thus operate as a form of social justice, breaking down barriers both within the academy as well as between the academy and our broader publics, in order to maximise equity, diversity, and other social benefits.[13] The tearing down of these (long withstanding) metaphorical walls also represents a recognition that we can no longer exclude or gatekeep information from the communities we claim to serve in our research, especially when those contemporary (or descendant) communities are often excluded from the knowledge production of their own pasts.[14] We must also confront the reality that even the most well-intentioned, altruistic practitioners of public scholarship are deeply embedded within a neoliberal framework that itself rewards our participation in this very process through various benefits, including: financial compensation (e.g., paid speaking opportunities, grants, and awards), scholarly advancement (i.e., tenure and promotion), large social media followings, and so on.[15] Public scholars, both inside and outside the academy, must face the challenge of effectively participating in responsible and social-justice oriented public scholarship about the ancient world while simultaneously acknowledging our positionalities and privileges, and reflecting on the realities of our participation in this process.

This volume, *Ancient Pasts for Modern Audiences*, brings together specialists from a broad demographic and professional range – academics, museum curators, students, content creators, and media personalities – to discuss the challenges they face and to suggest possible avenues for engaging with and producing responsible public scholarship on the history, archaeology, and cultures of the ancient Mediterranean and its surrounding geographic regions. Collectively, the contributors address issues of cultural heritage, pedagogy, and public scholarship, and discuss ways in which we can responsibly engage and communicate with academic and non-academic audiences across various learning environments, including the classroom, museums, and social media. The authors of the fifteen chapters also address questions of positionality, voice, and representation in knowledge production, the ethical treatment of cultural heritage, and accessibility and inclusivity in public resources. The participants in the creation of this volume are integral to such conversations, since many of them come from diverse backgrounds – this includes both individuals from equity-deserving groups as well as those working outside

of the academy. We, the editors, also made the deliberate and conscious decision to prioritise contributions from students (both undergraduate and graduate), contingent faculty, early career scholars, volunteers, curators, artists, and working professionals, many of whom are typically excluded from traditional, large-scale publications such as this present work, but whose perspectives are essential if we are to truly produce responsible, inclusive, and diverse public scholarship on the ancient Mediterranean in the twenty-first century.[16]

Reimagining Equitable and Diverse Public Scholarship

Ancient Pasts for Modern Audiences promotes the creation of inclusive methods of knowledge mobilisation and communication in public spheres across three main areas: cultural heritage, pedagogy, and public-facing scholarship. These interrelated areas require close conversation and collaboration among practitioners across the social sciences and humanities, both in and beyond academic institutions, to enact responsible change. These areas, moreover, have been directly affected by the Eurocentric structures that have claimed ownership of ancient Mediterranean cultural heritage and have dictated how related topics were taught in schools and communicated to a broader public.

When we originally conceived of the structure of this volume, we organised the contributions into three sections: Museums, Teaching and Learning, and Global and Local Projects. Throughout the editorial process, and as the volume progressed from an idea to a more tangible reality, we realised that the division between these three general topics was not as rigid as their separation suggests. There are contributions within each of the volume's sections that could easily appear in another; we decided, however, to retain these imposed partitions not to create disunity among the volume as a whole, but to create – however artificially – digestible groups of chapters that could be considered in tandem. Each contribution tackles pressing challenges faced within the various inextricably linked fields of public-facing scholarship, and each offers ways in which we can overcome the exclusionary narratives that have long plagued the ways in which knowledge on the ancient Mediterranean has been generated and communicated.

Section 1: Museums

The material heritage of the ancient Mediterranean has been subject to colonial extraction for several centuries, with the result that cultural artefacts and human remains are currently dispersed across museums worldwide. Regardless of whether these transplanted people and objects are on display or within storerooms, their displacement raises countless ethical dilemmas. Museums themselves are rooted in imperialist ideologies of ownership and exclusion, de-centring the real people behind the prized acquisitions and the modern stakeholder communities from which these acquisitions originated.[17] While advances are being made in the spirit of access and education for communities, the operating models and

philosophies towards "shared cultural heritage" are often inextricably intertwined with legacies of colonialism and exploitation.

The chapters in the "Museums" section address issues of ownership, rematriation, repatriation, restitution, decolonisation, access, ethics, and the construction of provenance narratives. Through several avenues, the authors of these chapters offer strategies aimed towards transforming museum displays, exhibits, and the spaces within these (often public) institutions in such a way that places past people and modern stakeholders at the centre of knowledge creation and communication. In Chapter 1, Frances Gallart Marqués presents ways in which Latin American museum programming can incorporate Greco-Roman materials in their collections to support social justice goals. Specifically, she uses copies of Mediterranean sculptures held at the Museum of Fine Arts in Santiago as a case study to make visible the oppressive histories that are embodied in the imposition of foreign artistic models on local communities and describes initiatives that have successfully incorporated local community members and invited non-traditional ways of interacting with art collections. In Chapter 2, Annissa Malvoisin investigates the dichotomy that exists between African collections in museums, critiquing the traditional disassociation of Egyptian and Nubian artefacts from the material culture of East and West Africa. Her work offers a path forward for curators and museum audiences alike to engage in decolonial work through an appeal to reform collections management practices, create object biographies that centre transnational relationships, and engage with interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research strategies. In Chapter 3, Heba Abd el-Gawad offers a critical reflection of public discourse and the knowledge production process surrounding the ancient societies of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). She argues for the need to approach the region from a settler-colonial perspective and issues a call to action for scholars working in these regions to acknowledge MENA communities' rights to Indigeneity, to respect Indigenous consent, to recognise the rights and positionality of these communities, and to participate in the rematriation of indigenous ways of being, seeing, and doing. In Chapter 4, Kendall Lovely problematises the current attempts to "indigenise" or "decolonise" classics curricula, and the ways in which classicists can learn from and build towards community-centred work. With a focus on emerging museum professionals, she suggests practical ways in which we might confront colonial frameworks and contribute to meaningful decolonising efforts in both museums and classroom spaces. Finally, in Chapter 5, Ashton Rodgers uses the concept of "density" – derived from Critical Indigenous Studies – to investigate the relationships between provenance narratives, ancient Mediterranean collections, and colonisation in relation to the Bay View Association (BVA) collection at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology. Through this case study, she sheds light on the multiple layers of colonial violence and extraction that are embedded in the history of this collection, and the ways in which these stories must be included in the provenance narratives of museum objects.

Together, these chapters offer pathways for museum professionals and scholars alike to reconsider industry practices and standards through the lens of decolonisation and community-centred research. Each of these author's contributions, derived from their respective positionality, expertise, and firsthand experience in museum contexts, allows us to shift our conception of museums and cultural heritage institutions from~~as~~ passive receptacles of material culture~~,~~ to spaces that can actively engage in the advancement of social justice and equity.

Teaching and Learning

the teaching of ancient Mediterranean topics – including those related to history, archaeology, culture, mythology, language, literature, philosophy, art, architecture, and so on – occurs every day in educational institutions worldwide, from primary classrooms to postsecondary lecture halls to online fora. As with museums and cultural heritage, teaching holds the promise of responsible and socially transformative learning in relation to the ancient Mediterranean, but only when curricula are intentionally and responsibly re-formed into inclusive arenas of knowledge creation and communication.

The authors in this section examine several avenues to implement impactful and transformative pedagogies for teaching and learning about the ancient Mediterranean. In Chapter 6, Christine L. Johnston, Sabrina C. Higgins, Megan Daniels, and Victoria Austen, four members of the public humanities initiative *Peopling the Past*, discuss the platform's goals of centring diverse voices in both the ancient and modern worlds through open-access multimedia tools. They highlight the importance and impact of multivocality and multimodality as learning strategies in the classroom, especially when teaching about the ancient Mediterranean world, to counteract the pervasive metanarratives that perpetuate Eurocentric perspectives and agendas. In Chapter 7, Nadhira Hill presents her public scholarship initiative, the online blog *Notes from the Apotheke*, in which she aims to demystify the "hidden curriculum" in ancient Mediterranean studies – an obstacle that disproportionately affects students of colour and presents ongoing barriers towards equity and inclusion in the discipline. She also engages with counter storytelling, a tenet of Critical Race Theory, to challenge the idea that antiquity belongs to a White majority. In Chapter 8, Melissa Funke, Kira Lang, Colton Van Gerwen, and Bourke Karras reflect on the University of Winnipeg's *Lux Project* and the role of small-scale projects in making the ancient Mediterranean more accessible to a diverse student body and local communities alike. While discussing the project's activities, these authors also suggest tangible ways that undergraduates can contribute to public scholarship through their involvement in such initiatives, thereby allowing them to be researchers and public scholars themselves. In Chapter 9, Christine L. Johnston, Alan Wheeler, Alexis Nunn, and Erin Escobar explore the use of 3D-printed and replica objects in the teaching of the ancient Mediterranean world, through the creation of multi-modal

and authentic active learning experiences that enhance course accessibility. Their success is realised through the introduction of a learning module, informed by postcolonial and Indigenous archaeological critiques of museum holdings and western dominant epistemologies in collecting practices, that facilitates broader discussions related to looting, cultural heritage protection, and restitution. Finally, in Chapter 10, Ella J. Gonzalez, Danielle Ortiz, and Jennifer Stager examine the ways in which digital humanities projects can inform research-driven teaching models through a presentation of the Antioch Recovery Project, a pedagogically centred research initiative that aims to digitally reunite the vast corpus of mosaic fragments from the ancient city of Antioch, which are currently dispersed across various institutions around the globe. This chapter highlights benefits of collaborative humanities research and a "flipped classroom" approach employed by the authors, wherein the larger research goals of the project were informed by the specialisations and interests of the students enrolled in the course.

As a collection, these chapters highlight the multitude of ways in which we can critically engage undergraduate and graduate students with the study of ancient Mediterranean topics, both through the provision of teaching materials that challenge the pervasive Eurocentric narratives within the field, and~~but~~ also through their direct participation in projects that contribute to knowledge creation, in which they are inducted into "communities of practice" of responsible public scholarship.[18]

Global and Local Projects

We believe that responsible praxis in the humanities involves investing in public scholarship, particularly when historical narratives are co-opted and misrepresented for modern purposes. Most conspicuously, white-centred ideas of a "western" heritage originating in Greece and Rome have bolstered political and social movements of late,[19] while popular media promulgate a particular vision of the Mediterranean past, othering and fetishising cultures of Mesopotamia and Egypt, while giving primacy to romanticised presentations of Greece and Rome. The universalising metanarratives that prop up a socially constructed "West;" continue to influence not only how modern publics understand the ancient Mediterranean, but also who has a say in telling these histories; and what communities get to be the recipients of this knowledge production. We can counteract such narratives by generating publicly accessible scholarship that is inclusive of both past and present diversity and by approaching our work through the lens of social justice, both on a local and global scale.[20]

In this section, the authors showcase various avenues for responsible public engagement and the creation of public-facing scholarship that address the problematic frameworks so often applied to the ancient past, while also offering suggestions for more inclusive pathways for knowledge acquisition, communication, and promulgation. In Chapter 11, Chelsea A.M. Gardner and Victoria Austen

highlight their work as Wikipedia scholars and the ways in which Wikipedia can allow students (as scholars) to conduct impactful research and to contribute to free, open-access resources that have a direct effect on global awareness of topics related to the ancient Mediterranean. The authors argue that the Wiki Education platform can help equip a new generation of students with the tools needed to improve the content found within this "free encyclopaedia"; in doing so, Wiki scholars break down barriers to globally accessible knowledge and work towards responsibly generating public-facing scholarship. In Chapter 12, Franceso Ripanti, Giorgos Papantoniou, Athanasios Vionis, and Andreas Lanitis discuss the ways in which archaeology and community-based heritage programmes can positively impact local communities. Through the lens of the *Settled and Sacred Landscapes of Cyprus* project, the authors argue for the importance of community-based approaches to archaeology, and the ways in which heritage initiatives can support the well-being of the local inhabitants. In Chapter 13, Gino Canlas, Julian Weideman, Andrew Danielson, Ian Randall, and M. Willis Monroe consider the collaborative structure of the *Database of Religious History* and its potential to engage with the global history of religion through the creation of open-access materials to research, teach, explore, and compare different approaches to religious beliefs, practices, and history. They discuss democratising approaches to knowledge construction and diffusion through their efforts to promote the work of scholars beyond the Global North, to provide fair and equitable compensation to their contributors, and to publish the resulting data across multiple languages on the platform. In Chapter 14, Sabrina C. Higgins, Aurora E. Camaño, and Michael R. Laurence reflect on the complicity of digital humanities projects in their reproduction of neoliberal practices within the university. The authors employ a reflexive exercise that critically examines the issues embedded within their own burgeoning digital humanities initiative – the *Digital Mary Project* – and the ways in which they might re-envision the activities undertaken in this online space as a digital counter-practice that embraces a more equitable communal framework. Finally, in Chapter 15, Melissa Funke, Liv Albert, Flora Kirk, and Megan Lewis explore how academics and public humanists can collaborate to reach the broadest possible audiences, while also openly acknowledging the challenges they face as public scholars. In this interview-style chapter, the authors address questions related to their choice of medium and its impact on knowledge translation, the role of a public humanist, and the responsibility of public scholars outside of the academy to engage ethically with the ancient past.

Ultimately, the goal of *Ancient Pasts for Modern Audiences* is to produce, support, and showcase diverse and inclusive public scholarship. By drawing heavily on the work of scholars and professionals frequently excluded from traditional discourse on public scholarship, the chapters in this volume seek to push research contributions beyond the traditional academic boundaries, produce a series of best practices translatable across numerous disciplines that address the exclusionary pasts of Mediterranean history, and communicate these practices and

resources to educators and scholars within and beyond ancient Mediterranean studies. The Open Access format of this volume represents our further commitment to accessible and equitable scholarship, ensuring that anyone with an interest in Mediterranean, West Asian or North African antiquity can access the information within. To that end, we ask – albeit in very traditional aca-speak – that you please share widely with your networks, colleagues, students, and friends.

Notes

1 There are currently countless projects that allow individuals to access information, resources, platforms, interactive tools, and courses relating to the ancient Mediterranean. Global-scale initiatives like Wikipedia, Khan Academy and Smarthistory include, as a part of their extensive offerings, materials related to the ancient Mediterranean world, while smaller, often grass-roots projects, such as Digital Hammurabi, Everyday Orientalism, Perseus Digital Library, Peopling the Past, and Trismegistos (to name only a few!), focus their efforts and resulting digital resources exclusively on content related to the ancient Mediterranean, North Africa, and Western Asia, broadly construed. See Johnston and Gardner 2024, for a recent survey on digital media and online resources used in ancient Mediterranean teaching. Public scholarship can also exist in the form of content creation by academics who engage widely with the public through social media, such as the work of Flint Dibble or Ellie Mackin Roberts.

2 There is a growing trend to publish Open Access in social sciences and humanities disciplines, but in 2023 only 36% of scholarly articles, reviews, and conferences papers were published Gold Open Access (immediate free access), while 53% remained either subscription-based, available exclusively through institutional affiliation with a university or related organisation, or behind a paywall (Derges 2024, https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/17961277/). Thus, more than half of all scholarly publications in 2023 were inaccessible to the general public. It is important to note that these numbers, however, do not consider academic monographs or edited volumes, where the percentage of Open Access publications is significantly lower (Brown et al. 2023).

3 Wengrow 2018, October 2.

4 For a discussion of "lifeworlds," see Husserl 1976.

5 Bhalerao 2023. See especially, her discussion (pp. 165–66) of UNESCO's framing of the "outstanding universal value" of the Parthenon, which is situated in its presentation as a "singularly," classical site, ignoring its later existence as a mosque (among other things). See also, Brusius 2021, for a discussion of the colonial impacts of Eurocentric collecting policies on the ways in which we encounter ancient objects from Western Asia (the "Middle East") in museum contexts and a lack of engagement – by these institutions – with their modern histories of extraction after violent imperial conquests.

6 Umachandran 2017, June 5.

7 For a discussion of the lack of diversity in the field of classics, see Heath-Stout 2020, 413, 420, and fig. 1; and Heath-Stout et al. 2023. On the legacies of colonialism and classics, see Said 1978; Singh Dhindsa 2020; Umachandran and Ward 2023 3–34; and Blouin and Akrigg 2024, the latter of which is an edited volume dedicated entirely to an exploration of classics and its relationship to colonialism. N.B. Throughout this section, we use classics as the exemplum, but all the traditional disciplines related to ancient Mediterranean studies (egyptology, assyriology, classical archaeology, etc.) have similar colonial pasts, exclusionary agendas, and hardworking (often minoritised) scholars labouring tirelessly for improvement.

8 Haley 1993, 36; Vlassopoulos 2007; Rankine 2019; Poser 2021; Eccleston and Padilla Peralta 2022. These critiques are central to the field of Critical Ancient World Studies (CAWS), on which see, Umachandran and Ward 2023, 3–34.
9 Padilla Peralta 2019, January 7.
10 Singh Dhindsa 2020.
11 Hanink 2017, May 1.
12 Umachandran 2019, June 11.
13 See, Kezar et al. 2018, 4, where they discuss the intersectional potential of public scholarship and the ways in which marginalised voices can find a platform for their scholarship.
14 Risam 2022, 41–47; Abd el-Gawad 2023, 289–304; Abd el-Gawad and Stevenson 2023; and Jones, 2024, April 12. See also Abd el-Gawad's discussion in this volume.
15 Risam 2022, 46; and Higgins et al., this volume.
16 Only five of the thirty-five authors who contributed to this volume were tenured professors at the time of its acceptance for publication, including the two co-editors of the volume.
17 Brusius 2021; Abd el Gawad 2023; Abd el-Gawad and Stevenson 2023.
18 See Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015, for a discussion of "communities of practice."
19 For example, the terrorist group Golden Dawn in Europe (e.g., Gardner 2019), and the use of "Molon Labe" as a rallying cry for pro-gun enthusiasts in the United States (e.g., Bond 2018). See the important work of the *Pharos: Doing Justice to the Classics*, under the direction of Curtis Dozier: https://pharos.vassarspaces.net/.
20 It is essential, moreover, that our concept of diversity is intersectional, including: "race, religion, caste, creed, class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, geographical isolation, socioeconomic status, and other characteristics of difference" (Risam et al. 2022, 4).

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SECTION 1

Museums

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1

I WILL BELIEVE IN ART WHEN IT IS MADE FOR THE PEOPLE

Teaching with Greco-Roman Copies in Santiago

Frances Gallart Marqués

Introduction[1]

Even in the bright light of day, the air in Santiago was often heavy with the presence of tear gas. By the end of 2019, what had begun in October as protests against the rising cost of public transportation, had resulted in a country-wide conflict. Collectively known as the "Estallido Social" (social outburst), the protests – in their quest for economic and social justice – questioned the very foundations of the Chilean state. On the walls of a large neoclassical palace, recently covered with graffiti, one could read the following words: "creére en el arte cuando este hecho para la gente [sic]" ("I will believe in art when it is made for the people"; see Figure 1.1).[2] The palace, located approximately one kilometre from the epicentre of protests, houses two museums: the National Museum of Fine Arts (MNBA, following its Spanish acronym) and the University of Chile's Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC).[3] Recognised as a national patrimonial building by the state, it was one of many monuments swept up in the more general questioning of the social and symbolic fabric of the city.[4] The museum employees had no choice but to re-examine their formal responsibilities within the context of the "Estallido," as well as their relationship to the public.[5]

The present chapter explores how ancient Mediterranean materials can be used within the Latin American context as part of a museology that supports social justice goals. To this end, I look at the work of educators at the MNBA, both before the onset of the "Estallido" and the soon-to-follow Covid-19 pandemic, and in the aftermath of these crises. I joined the museum's team of educators in 2017 on an *ad hoc* basis and have been invited to contribute to their initiatives in my capacity as an archaeologist with an expertise in the ancient Mediterranean.[6] Although its collection does not include any ancient originals, the MNBA is home to a number

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FIGURE 1.1 Graffiti on the exterior of the MNBA. Photo by Benjamín Matte V.

of Greco-Roman copies, which have frequently been displayed in the museum's main hall.[7]

Deployed since the nineteenth century in the legitimation and reproduction of elite values, copies of famous Greco-Roman sculptures were forced into the Chilean *milieu* and quickly incorporated into its official artistic education. In Chile, the copies are an incarnation of what Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano

calls "colonialidad" (coloniality), in particular "colonialidad del saber" (coloniality of knowledge): the imposition of European ways of knowing as the only ways of knowing. For Quijano, "colonialilty" survives even when "colonialism" ends (i.e., after political independence from Europe is gained).[8] A society will remain "colonised" so long as its ways of knowing are rooted in colonialism.

I argue that museums that hold Greco-Roman objects must use them, first and foremost, in collaboration with their communities, and with the goal of facilitating discussions that are pertinent to these communities and their contemporary political contexts; only then can these museums make visible the oppressive histories embodied in the imposition of foreign artistic models. For example, museums should use these materials not just to teach Greco-Roman antiquity, but to problematise their own history. If the "Estallido" made anything clear, it is that people want art that serves their needs. So, who were the Greco-Roman copies made for? Might they be repurposed? How?

Despite the urgency brought on by the protests, the re-evaluation of the roles of museums and their collections has been a concern of Chilean museum workers for at least half a century. In 1972, the "Round Table of Santiago," a meeting of Latin American museum professionals convened by UNESCO and ICOM, produced the "Declaración de Santiago de Chile" (Santiago Declaration) and introduced the concept of the "integral museum," a museum that is integrated into – and in the service of – its community.[9] The integral museum, as defined by Latin Americans, was meant to tackle Latin American issues, specifically: "problems of the rural environment, of the urban environment, of scientific and technological development and of lifelong education." Success in this endeavour can be achieved by creating awareness and encouraging action from local communities. Integral museums should, for example, curate exhibitions that reveal social, ecological, and environmental problems (and make progress towards solutions), be at the forefront of technological development, and offer training programmes to teachers of all levels.[10]

Although the immediate impact of the "Round Table" was modest, the principles set forth in the Santiago Declaration shaped the outlooks of many Latin American museums and soon inspired other international museology movements.[11] In Chile, change was slowed by the 1973 coup and subsequent dictatorship. With the return of democracy in the 1990s and the consequent reinstatement of MNBA director Nemesio Antúnez, the museum revived its mission of becoming a collaborative space, fully open to its community, with programming cognisant of its social and political contingency. It is within the context of this ongoing undertaking that this chapter explores the use of Greco-Roman copies by museum educators. To do so, I first offer a brief introduction to the museum and its collection of copies, and then discuss three case studies in which the copies were used to support programmes in service of the community: a collaborative exhibition, mediated visits, and a workshop for teachers. A consideration of the copies' current whereabouts and future role(s) will form the conclusion.

Building a Museum, Building a Nation

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the city of Santiago experienced a rapid physical transformation resulting from the consolidation of Chile's political and economic systems. An urgent project for the ruling class, especially as the centennial celebrations of the nation's emancipation approached, the "modernisation" of the city was swift, and closely followed European models of urban planning.[12] Urbanisation reforms included the canalisation of the Mapocho River, the creation of public parks, squares and promenades, the widening and decluttering of streets, and the physical demarcation of the city centre.[13]

Although both an Academy of Fine Arts and a Museum of Fine Arts have existed since 1849 and 1880, respectively, they were inadequately housed, resulting in low enrolment to the academy, and a dearth of visitors to the museum, among other issues. As a result, calls to revitalise Chilean art and art education began to appear at the same time as the urbanisation reforms.[14] In 1869, for example, journalist Daniel Barros Grez recommended the creation of a collection of copies of European masterworks, which he believed would inspire the development of great Chilean artists:

> let's start with a collection of good copies with the eventual goal of obtaining good original works by Chilean painters. […] in regard to models, anything has more value than nothing, especially when that anything could be a good collection of reproductions of classical artworks, and when with that anything Chile could achieve an understanding of the love for arts, the establishment of good taste among the people, the education of artists, and eventually, the production of masterworks.[15]

Later in the century, the proposals and efforts of cousins Ramón Subercaseaux Vicuña and Alberto Mackenna Subercaseaux would lead to significant reforms to the Academy of Fine Arts and the eventual construction of the Palace of Fine Arts (Palacio de Bellas Artes, inaugurated in 1910), the latter of which was intended to house both the museum and the academy.[16] It was at this time, too, that the idea of a "collection of good copies" bore fruit with the consolidation of the "Museo de Copias" (Museum of Copies), a collection of more than 550 pieces brought over from Europe. The collection included plaster casts and reproductions in marble, bronze, and terracotta of Greco-Roman, Renaissance, and early modern sculpture, along with reliefs, architectural fragments, and decorative art, all of which were to be displayed in the newly built palace.[17]

The contest for the design of the "Palacio" was won by Émile Jéquier, an architect born in Chile but educated in Paris at L'École des Beaux-Arts. Jéquier's design, which immediately recalled the Petit Palais in France, aimed to balance an austere neoclassical exterior with an ornate, light-filled interior. Capped by a massive glass-and-steel dome and embellished with metal railings done in the

then-fashionable Art Nouveau style, the palace's main hall became a showcase of both modern aesthetic and technologies.[18]

The canalisation of the Mapocho river yielded an extensive vacant lot, ideal for both the construction of Jéquier's museum and for the creation of a grand, axially aligned park, the Parque Forestal.[19] People could stroll through the park to then be greeted by the museum's imposing façade. Upon entering, visitors would encounter the seeming continuation of the park within the museum's central hall. Conceived of as a large greenhouse, sunlight would have filtered through the hall's glass ceiling, illuminating the plants and art alike (see Figure 1.2). The main hall was the first point of contact between the public and the museum's collections, since works from the "Museum of Copies" were interspersed among the greenery and displayed without any discernible thematic, chronological, or otherwise didactic sense. The park, the palace, and the art displayed therein, all of which followed European models, were designed specifically to mould the "good taste" of Chilean people in general and to hone the aesthetic sensibilities of Chilean artists in particular, as envisioned by Barros Grez and others.

The academic tradition that viewed copying as a formative necessity, and that had propelled the creation and collection of copies, was eventually challenged in the twentieth century.[20] In Chile, the military dictatorship of Carlos Ibañez in the 1920s, for example, enacted programmes that supported the applied arts to the detriment of the fine arts. Once-treasured works quickly dropped in value, leading the MNBA to lose most of its copies through dispersal to other institutions, theft, destruction, or general lack of care. Today, less than 10% of the collection remains in the museum.

Beginning in 2007, renewed interest in the "Museum of Copies" inspired exhaustive research into the history and fate of the collection, and led to its partial virtual reconstruction, the recovery of pieces from other state institutions, and the creation of a specialised depot to properly store the works. In 2016, the exhibition "Tránsitos" (Transits), curated by Gloria Cortés, returned a number of the remaining sculptures from the "Museum of Copies" to the main hall of the MNBA.[21] Of relevance to the present discussion are the marble versions of the "Apollo Belvedere" and "Crouching Venus," a bronze cast of the "Spinario," and a plaster cast of the "Sandal-Binder" relief from the Temple of Athena Nike in Athens.[22] Though "Tránsitos" closed its run at the end of 2019, a select group of copies remains on view across the museum.

In addition to the remaining pieces of the "Museum of Copies," the MNBA houses a collection of about 5,000 works from both local and international artists, spanning from the Chilean colonial period until the present day.[23] Just over 300,000 people visit the museum annually, and comprise a diverse audience in terms of age, gender, and occupation, although not necessarily national origin.[24] The responsibility for developing strategies to reach these visitors falls mainly on the Area of Mediation and Education (AME), which comprises a team of professionals trained in education and the visual arts.

FIGURE 1.2 The main hall of the MNBA ca. 1911. Photo courtesy of the Ministerio de Obras Públicas, Dirección de Arquitectura, Archivo Fotográfico, Santiago, Chile.

The AME's mission is "to promote dialogue through artistic mediation between the different audiences of the Museum, its institutional transformations, and the works of its collection, in order to generate instances for critical reflection and cultural interaction, within the framework of a human rights approach."[25] This mission and the team's work are grounded, first and foremost, in the teachings of critical pedagogy, particularly those proposed by Paulo Freire in the 1970s. Freire, who wrote his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* while in exile in Chile, contended that education, which is always political, should have as its aim the humanisation and liberation of learners. Notably for Freire, social transformation through pedagogy is to be achieved through dialogue, critical inquiry, and collaborative work.[26]

An offshoot of critical pedagogy – that likewise grounds the work of the AME – is social justice art education, which proposes strategies for a collaborative, liberating pedagogy with a particular focus on the arts.[27] The AME also subscribes to the new museology discourse as advanced by the ideological heir to the "Round Table of Santiago," the International Movement for a New Museology, which is built on solidarity, and positions museums as places where injustice can – and should – be fought.[28] Key to all three philosophies is collaboration: to be effective, outreach initiatives should be carried out in partnership with the community.[29]

The AME's commitment to critical pedagogy aligns well with the broader revaluation of the "Museum of Copies," and the attendant reckoning of the MNBA's oppressive origins. Additionally, as renewed interest in the study and conservation of the copies has allowed for their innovative use in exhibitions, it has also made a number of them available for use in teaching and public outreach initiatives. The remainder of the chapter will discuss some of these projects and how they conform to the ideals of an "integral museum" to fulfil the needs of contemporary audiences (Figure 1.2).

"Entre": Curatorial Work as Collaboration

As mentioned above, the year 2016 saw the resurrection of the "Museum of Copies" as part of the exhibition "Tránsitos." At least two other curatorial projects that year, "Copias y Citas" (Copies and Citations), and "Caravaggio en Chile: Luz del Barroco" (Caravaggio in Chile: Light of the Baroque), also focused on visual appropriation and the creation of copies.[30] The thematic harmony of these shows allowed the AME to propose a programme that would explicitly explore the concepts of copy, citation, and original, while honouring their mission to foster close relationships between the public and their artistic heritage. The result was their own exhibition, done in collaboration with the community, titled "Entre: Ejercicios de Apropiación Visual" (In Between: Exercises in Visual Appropriation).[31]

"Entre" displayed eight paintings from the museum's collection of Chilean art alongside 80 canvases completed by children, teenagers, and older adults; the latter included strict copies of the original paintings, as well as works more loosely inspired by them. By displaying the originals next to their copies, the exhibition hoped to generate dialogues about the value and legitimation of art, the meanings (and merits) of originality, authenticity, and mimicry, and the evolving roles and responsibilities of the museum. "Entre" was a truly collaborative exhibition, as it combined a pedagogical proposal from the AME with the work of several community groups involved in art education. AME's proposed project would have the community groups explore one of the foundational blocks of nineteenth-century artistic training in Chile – that is, the copying of European masterworks – by asking them to produce their own copies. Instead of using foreign art as models, however, and in an effort to upend the belief in the superiority of imported standards, community groups would work off original Chilean pieces.

In discussing the local history of the practice of copying with the community groups, the Greco-Roman copies displayed in the museum were used as examples. The MNBA's version of the "Apollo Belvedere" was particularly useful in considering the importance of interpretation and intention in art. Not only is the "original" in the Vatican Museums a copy itself, but the version in Chile is not its exact replica: the sculptor of the MNBA's Apollo reduced its scale, and reconstructed his right hand.

The works produced by the community groups were displayed in their own gallery, just above and still adjacent to the main hall of the museum. In addition to the many canvases, the walls of the exhibition space were occupied with four types of texts: definitions, testimonies, large questions, and small questions.[32] Four words were defined: original, copy, citation, and museum; their definitions, capitalised, framed, and placed high above the paintings, were simple and offered a shared starting point from which to approach the show. Testimonies from select participants were set within speech bubbles next to their contributions. "Large" questions (both in font size and scope) were placed near the top of the wall, and reinforced the problems proposed by the show (e.g., "Can a copy or citation be an original?"). Smaller questions, more targeted in their aim, were interspersed among the paintings (e.g., "What role do you think museums should have in the present?").[33] The function of each text type was briefly explained with additional text panels, while the programme's concept and development were made transparent by projected films that showed interviews with community participants and AME staff, along with snapshots of their painting processes. The whole exhibit was planned to allow for autonomous visits by the public.

The official display of paintings made by community artists – as young as 3, and as old as 92 – and their juxtaposition to the copies brought over from Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, made a clear statement about the evolving roles of museums and their collections in the twenty-first century. In the case of "Entre," the foundational collection of the museum took a back seat to the paintings shared by the community. Not only did the latter group of artwork achieve a comparable level of recognition through their exhibition within the museum's halls, but they became the tools through which the public could approach and understand the former. Here, the Chilean public was no longer "educated" through their confrontation with Greco-Roman art, but rather that art was illuminated by work created for them from within their own community.

Mediation: Museum Visits as Collaboration

The "mediated" visits offered annually at the MNBA between March and December is, in terms of reach, one of the most impactful outreach programmes provided by the AME. Visits are free for everyone, last approximately one hour, and should be scheduled at least two days in advance. The initiative aims to challenge the many different publics that come into the museum by encouraging them to rethink their pre-conceived ideas about art – in particular, Chilean art – and its material role in the construction of the Chilean nation.

Visits are conceived of as "mediated" rather than "guided," as the even exchange of ideas between visitors and "mediators" (AME staff) lies at the core of the experience. Visitors are encouraged to communicate their anxieties, preferences, experiences, and questions, while mediators respond by sharing information that may further stimulate participation and reflection. The practice aims to

deepen the public's appreciation of art by complicating, rather than flattening or standardising, the possible readings of the works on view.

Three aspects are vital to this approach: (1) genuinely valuing the knowledge that visitors already bring with them, (2) trusting that these visitors are the experts of their own needs and wants, and (3) allowing the public to make decisions about the experience they are about to have. Educators can achieve these goals through open dialogue with their visitors. As Freire notes: "dialogue further requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in their vocation to be more fully human (which is not the privilege of an elite, but the birthright of all)."[34] A small example of this practice is that – while the themes of the visits can be agreed upon in advance with the museum – AME staff allow groups to re-evaluate their priorities once in the physical space of the museum and in the presence of the art.[35]

Another staple of the mediated visits is the practice of "slow looking." A method developed in museums, slow looking supports critical thinking through patient contemplation. By encouraging detailed observation from multiple perspectives, the practice can direct people to move beyond superficial first impressions, and to make thoughtful connections between their own experience and the world around them. Slow looking can also challenge traditional power dynamics in museum spaces by inviting visitors to think without the need of interpretive materials like labels; as a result, this practice can ease people into opening themselves to otherness, foster empathy, and facilitate discussions of difficult cultural and ethical issues.[36]

Mediated visits at the MNBA usually begin with a general introduction to the museum, its history, and its architecture, and are then followed by more focused discussions of whichever items from the collection are presently on view. Because the introduction takes place in the museum's main hall, visitors first encounter the works that are displayed in that space. From 2016 until the end of 2019, throughout the long run of "Tránsitos," it was the gleaming surfaces of the "Museum of Copies" that visitors first saw. As one of the people leading museum visits during this period, if an interest in discussing the copies was expressed by a given group I would proceed with an unhurried reading of one of the sculptures; I started the process myself, but then entrusted the conversation to the visitors.

In my experience, the fact that the Greco-Roman works at our disposal were "copies" made them more approachable objects for critique and discussion – despite the potentially intimidating nature of materials such as marble and bronze and in spite of the these sculptures' privileged position within the museum's space. A slow observation of the Apollo Belvedere, for example, enabled me to begin candid conversations about idealised bodies and their attendant ideologies, and allowed visitors to ask questions about the origins of the museum.[37] Why, for instance, were the particular copies in the collection selected for purchase? What was the imperative for their transport to Chile? How did their meaning change once on Chilean soil?

"Tránsitos," which looked at the physical and conceptual movement of sculpture between Chile and Europe, also included original works commissioned from Chilean artists studying abroad, through a state-sponsorship programme. Visitors, then, were encouraged to make subsequent comparisons with original Chilean sculpture through the organisational logic of the exhibition. In my experience, an examination of Nicanor Plaza's "El jugador de palin" (1880) usually proved illuminating and is thus used as a case study here.[38] A slightly smaller-than-life-size bronze, Plaza's sculpture shows an idealised Mapuche youth, dressed only in loose, short pants and a headband, in the midst of playing palin, a community game with both ritual and socio-political functions.[39] The work is an emblem of national sculpture and a vivid part of the Chilean popular imagination (see Figure 1.3). Its visual vocabulary, however, is that of neoclassicism, a fact that becomes inescapable after the careful consideration of the Greco-Roman copies in its vicinity. Viewing Plaza's work right after the Apollo Belvedere, for instance, easily allowed people to notice that its idealised form was not local, but imported, and the sculpture – which was produced at the tail end of the Chilean occupation of Araucanía (1861–1883) – was perhaps not conceived as a

FIGURE 1.3 Nicanor Plaza's "El jugador de palin" (1880), left; Francisco Maturana's mural at Mosqueto 456, Santiago, "Jugador de palin" (2018), right. Photos courtesy of the Departamento de Comunicaciones, MNBA, with permission from Francisco Maturana.

celebration of indigeneity, but within the context of a military campaign of colonisation. As the spoils of that campaign, through the figure of General Marcos Maturana, indirectly contributed to the creation of the museum, indictments of this sculpture have usually been accompanied by an indictment of the institution that houses it.[40]

It is likely the case that this precise exercise involving comparisons between European and Chilean art came easier to me than to my Chileans colleagues, since my identity as a foreigner placed me, in a sense, on more balanced footing with local visitors: while I was more practised on discussions of Mediterranean antiquity, they were better informed about Chilean history; they may have been less intimidated by my positionality and, thus, more willing to talk. Visitors' reflections about Chilean art then, even if guided, did not appear forced; they happened organically after the collaborative pooling of our distinct fonts of expertise.

In my experience, mediated visits that addressed Greco-Roman copies alongside emblematic works of Chilean art were effective in exposing the damaging, long-held belief in the superiority of foreign models and often led to reflections about the responsibility of the museum in the propagation and perpetuation of these ideas. A museum mediation practice that values social justice must allow for a critique of its own work and of the institution that it represents. It can do this by providing a non-judgemental space for people to express their concerns, and an active say in their own experiences. As Freire notes: "Problem-posing education does not and cannot serve the interests of the oppressor. No oppressive order could permit the oppressed to begin to question: Why?"[41]

"Aula y Museo": Teaching as Collaboration

Whereas mediated visits are open to the public, a more targeted audience is the goal of another of the AME's initiatives: short courses for teachers grouped under the umbrella name "Aula y Museo" (classroom and museum). The word "courses" is used here for lack of a better term, as the programme neither positions the AME's staff as lecturers, nor the teachers as recipients of knowledge; rather, it places the expertise of both groups in a dialogue. The particular aim of this project is to explore whether the possibilities for learning offered by the museum and its collection are transferable to formal teaching spaces, such as schools and universities. "Aula y Museo" courses were launched in 2005 and are offered free of charge on evenings over the span of several weeks, and are open to all teachers, regardless of discipline. They are designed to encourage reflection and collaborative work around pedagogical, cultural, and ethical problems, and use the works exhibited at the MNBA as case studies.[42] A theme that best utilises the current curatorial programme is chosen, then discussed with teachers and used to generate activities that can be replicated in the classroom. An additional goal is to make any future visits to the museum meaningful to students beyond the break from routine they represent.

In 2018, for example, the theme "art as cultural expression" was chosen. One session of the course used the museum's Greco-Roman copies, still then on display in the main hall, and put them in tension with the work of contemporary Chilean artist Mónica Bengoa, whose retrospective exhibition "Mónica Bengoa: Tentativa de Inventario" (Attempt at an Inventory) was on display in adjacent galleries.[43] First, AME staff demonstrated how to engage in "slow looking" using the Apollo Belvedere as an example, exploring the manipulation of the body as an ideological tool (see Figure 1.4). The group then continued onward to the Bengoa exhibition where, after a brief introduction of the artist and her work, teachers were asked to lead their own formal analysis of the photographic series "Recursos Humanos: los abismos," which comprised larger-than-life-sized shots of the "geographical accidents" of the artist's body.[44]

The workshop proceeded with the collaborative design of an activity that could be easily enacted in the classroom after a museum visit by the students. The agreed-upon parameters were that the activity should be of interest to teenagers and young adults (the demographic served by this particular group of teachers), free, and easily replicable. The human body and the culturally specific ways in which it can communicate a person's positionality was chosen as a topic, as anxieties surrounding the body and its presentation were understood by the teachers to be of special concern to their students.

FIGURE 1.4 A group of teachers practices "slow looking" with the MNBA's marble copy of the "Apollo Belvedere." Photo courtesy of the Departamento de Comunicaciones, MNBA.

The activity that the group developed was simple: after a visit to the museum and "slow looking" exercises with the Apollo Belvedere and the Bengoa exhibition, students would be directed to photograph a part of their body (e.g., a finger, an ankle), and write a short paragraph discussing why that part was chosen, how they had decided to depict this body part, and what message they hoped to convey. Through this in-class activity, students could solidify the formal analytical techniques learned at the museum, and reformulate discussions about the body, its possible portrayals, as its many symbolic meanings.

"Aula y Museo" courses invite the use of the museum as a space for experimentation, for the uninhibited exchange of ideas, and the generation of networks. In my experience, practising multiple readings of the museum's collection is a useful exercise that can deepen an appreciation of the art under one's stewardship. Participating teachers, additionally, leave the course with activities they can implement in their classrooms and with proper plans for return visits in the company of their students. In the iteration of the course discussed here, Greco-Roman materials were once more placed in service of the needs of the community: namely, to assist discussions about the body and its meanings.

Paulonia and a Sustainable Museology

"Tránsitos" completed its run during the turbulent period between the onset of the "Estallido" and the Covid-19 pandemic. The museum's few remaining Greco-Roman copies did not go back into storage, however, but were instead used to address some of the demands made by the public in the aftermath of the aforementioned crises. The recent reacquisition of a noteworthy group of marble copies – after a 50-year stay in Chile's Military Academy – inspired a new curatorial project by Gloria Cortés.[45] The new exhibition not only celebrates the restoration of versions of the Laocoön and His Sons, the Medici Venus, and the Dying Gaul to the MNBA, but in doing so reclaims an underused space in the museum's exterior: the Patio de la Paulonia.[46]

The Patio is located on the museum's south side and is of institutional significance, since it functioned as a sculpture workshop for the students of the Academy of Fine Arts in the early twentieth century; these same students were responsible for planting the great Paulonia tree (*Paulownia tomentosa*) that identifies the space to this day. Now, the area is filled again with sculpture and allows the public the enjoyment of art *al fresco* (see Figure 1.5).

By moving its copies outside, the museum aims to solidify its links to the Parque Forestal and, in doing so, extend a hand to residents of the surrounding Lastarria and Bellas Artes neighbourhoods. Because of their proximity to the epicentre of the "Estallido," these communities suffered disproportionately from the police-inflicted violence of the protests, and experienced the consequent deterioration of their living spaces; they only saw the situation worsened by the economic decline brought on by the pandemic.[47] Honouring the environmental concerns

FIGURE 1.5 AME members Constanza Nilo and Mariana Vadell working with children in the "Patio de la Paulonia." Photo by Matías Cornejo.

already voiced at the "Round Table of Santiago," the exhibition looks for new ways of integrating the museum into the surrounding community and contributing to its development. The project is sustainable, as it reuses materials from previous installations, such as the galvanised steel plinths beneath the sculptures. It will also support the development of a restful green space along with community collaborators from the Barrio Arte cultural alliance, and the provision of comfortable

benches. The new exhibit thus supports the MNBA's goal of bringing audiences closer to their artistic and historic patrimony. The AME, for its part, is scheduling special mediated visits to the Paulonia and plans to host artistic workshops within. The museum's Greco-Roman copies will continue to be used to explore and challenge the tenacity of European influence in Chilean culture.

Conclusion: Art Made for the People?

The graffiti on the exterior walls of the MNBA have been since painted over, but their demands remain: were the Greco-Roman copies in its holding made for the people? Which people? Can the colonial logic at the heart of the museum be dismantled and reconstituted into something useful?

Although they are the embodiment of an elitist, Eurocentric past, Greco-Roman materials need not be seen as irrelevant to the current needs of the people of Santiago. In this chapter, I have argued that Greco-Roman materials can aid in the advancement of social justice goals when employed as part of educational projects developed in collaboration with the audiences one intends to serve. As seen here, educators at the MNBA have used copies of Greco-Roman sculpture to encourage Chileans to re-examine their own art, to support teachers within their classrooms and beyond, and to revitalise damaged and deteriorating public spaces. It is not enough, but it is a start. People know what they need; as long as their wishes are heard and respected, and their ways of knowing are valued, even formerly oppressive art can contribute to their liberation. I will believe in art that can be made anew for – and by – the people.

Notes

1 I thank past and current members of the MNBA's Area of Education and Mediation: Graciela Echiburu, Natalia Portugueis, Montserrat Brandan, Matías Cornejo, María José Cuello, Constanza Nilo, Mariana Vadell, and Yocelyn Valdebenito; this chapter describes their work, with all of my gratitude, and would not have been possible without their encouragement. I also thank Chelsea Gardner and Sabrina Higgins for their assistance in the revision of this article, as well as its reviewers and their helpful critiques. Any misrepresentations or errors are mine.
2 Unless otherwise noted, all translations are the author's.
3 Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, and Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, respectively.
4 Montes 2020.
5 For responses from museum workers, Facuse and Cavalcanti 2020. For actions by MNBA staff in particular, Echiburu 2020.
6 I am not Chilean, but Puerto Rican, and received most of my academic training in the United States.
7 The MNBA's collection of reproductions was referred to as the "Museo de Copias" (Museum of Copies) upon its foundation in 1911; it is still known by this name, even though it was never a museum in its own right. Its collections include works in marble, bronze, terracotta, and plaster. The word "copies" was used then to refer to the holdings in their entirety, and it is still the preferred term in Chilean art history. Keller

(2022, no. 1) makes distinctions between casts, semi-mechanically made reproductions, and handmade copies (such as those done in marble), but this chapter will use the term "copy" throughout for convenience.

8 See Abd el-Gawad, this volume, for a similar choice in terminology.

9 The documents of the "Round Table," as well as their reassessment on their 40th anniversary, can be found, in four languages, in Nacimento Junior, Trampe and Assunção dos Santos 2012.

10 Nacimento Junior, Trampe and Assunção dos Santos 2012, 255–56.

11 The proposal was first tested with the Casa del Museo (Mexico City 1972–1980); Pérez Castellanos 2022. For actions by then MNBA director Nemesio Antúnez, Keller 2022, 66–72. For work by Grete Mostny at the National Museum of Natural History, Valdebenito Carrasco 2022. MINOM, the International Movement for a New Museology, traces its ideological origins to the Santiago Declaration. MINOM-ICOM, "About us."

12 Fernández Domingo 2014, for how these urbanisation reforms represented both a "physical" and "mental" change for the city.

13 Vicuña Mackenna 1872.

14 For the state of the arts in Chile at the end of the nineteenth century, see Berríos et al. 2009, 368–90.

15 Barros Grez 1869. Translated by Natalia Keller (2022, 51, note 2): "principiemos por colectar buenas copias, a fin de llegar a obtener buenas obras orijinales de los pintores artistas chilenos. […] en cuanto a modelos, mas vale algo que nada, mayormente cuando ese algo puede ser una buena coleccion de copias de obras clásicas, i cuando con ese algo puede Chile llegar a entender el amor al arte, crear el gusto en el pueblo, formar artistas, i obtener, por fin, obras maestras."

16 Subercaseaux Vicuña 1892; Mackenna Subercaseaux 1915.

17 For an extensive history of the "Museum of Copies" in Spanish, Gallardo Saint-Jean 2015. In English, Keller 2022.

18 MNBA, "Historia del Museo."

19 Designed by landscape architect George Dubois, a graduate from the Versailles School of Gardening. Consejo de Monumentos Nacionales de Chile, "Parque Forestal y Entorno que Señala."

20 Alexandridis and Winkler-Horaček 2022. For the demise of the MNBA's collection in particular, Keller 2022, 62–72.

21 On view from July 14, 2016 to December 29, 2019. MNBA 2016c.

22 Respectively: Surdoc 2-34, after the Vatican Museums' Roman marble; Surdoc 2-1853; Surdoc 2-71, after the Capitoline Museum's Greek original; and Surdoc 2-5197, after the marble relief in the Athenian Acropolis Museum. Surdoc is Chile's database for the management of museum collections. Works can be found at: https://www.surdoc.cl/colecciones.

23 MNBA, "Antecedentes de las colecciones del MNBA."

24 Only 27% of visitors to the MNBA are foreign tourists, still above the national average of 15%. Área de Estudios, SNM 2020, 35–51.

25 "Promover el diálogo desde la mediación artística, entre los distintos públicos del Museo, su devenir institucional y las obras de su Colección, generando instancias para la reflexión crítica y la interacción cultural, en el marco de un enfoque de derechos humanos." MNBA, "Mediación y educación."

26 In English, Freire 2005.

27 Dewhurst 2010, 2023.

28 MINOM-ICOM, "About us."

29 For more on the importance of collaboration and relationship building in public outreach, see Lovely and Abd el-Gawad in this volume.

30 MNBA 2016a, 2016b.

31 On view from September 14, 2016 to March 19, 2017. MNBA 2017.

32 It is the hope of the AME team to be able to conduct impact studies for their initiatives sometime in the future. For a few testimonies from "Entre" participants, see MNBA 2017.
33 Admittedly, the question is huge. What role can an institution created to legitimise and preserve control over a certain way of knowing have that does not reinforce coloniality? Can museums be spaces where decolonisation happens? See the chapters by Malvoisin and Rodgers in this volume for recent decolonising approaches to museum practice.
34 Freire 2005, 90. Translation by Myra Bergman Ramos.
35 MNBA, "Reserva una visita mediada presencial."
36 Tishman 2017; chapter 5 for slow looking in museums.
37 The fascinating history of the Apollo Belvedere makes it a wonderful object for discussion: from the declaration of its "perfection" by Winkelmann and other Enlightenment thinkers, to its use to illustrate the "superior" European cranium in racist phrenological treatises (e.g., Nott and Gliddon 1854), to its recent adoption by white supremacist groups in the United States as part of their propaganda (e.g., Identity Evropa).
38 "The palin player," Surdoc 2-1413.
39 Museo Mapuche de Cañete, "Palin: un encuentro espiritual, social y politico."
40 Marcos Maturana, who participated in the colonisation of Araucanía, was an avid collector of art. He was part of the original commission tasked with the creation of a museum of fine arts, and donated works that became part of the museum's foundational collection. MNBA 2024, 40–43. For a subversive use of the "Jugador de Palin" in the MNBA's own hall, see MNBA, "Sebastián Calfuqueo: Nos Aniquilaron."
41 Freire 2005, 86. Translation by Myra Bergman Ramos.
42 For instance, MNBA 2015.
43 Bengoa 2017.
44 "Human Resources: the abysms." Bengoa 2017, 10–12.
45 MNBA, "Paulonia. Colección de esculturas MNBA."
46 Respectively: Surdoc 2-3648, after the Vatican Museums' famous work; Surdoc 2-3647, after the Uffizi Gallery's standing Venus; and Surdoc 2-1852, after the Capitoline Museums' Roman marble.
47 Ortiz et al. 2021.

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2

THE UNWAVERING DIVIDE

Collection and Display Practices of Ancient and Medieval African Collections

Annissa Malvoisin

Introduction

There are myriad divides that exist for ancient African collections in North American and European museums, but one of the most stark and historically burdened is the division which isolates ancient Egyptian and Nubian art from the artistic productions of Africa across all other periods and places.[1] The reasons for such divides range from the departmental organisation of museums themselves to decisions around which collection an object should be accessioned into, especially if it has an intersectional biography.[2] In the first case, the departmental organisation of ancient African collections in museums is a by-product of the collecting and classification methods of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which are rooted in western imperial and colonial rhetoric that foreground the eurocentrism pervading the field of art history. In many museums, European collections are still largely upheld as the pinnacle of a global artistic canon; a marked value system that prioritises these artistic practices is clear when considering artworks of African collections compared to their European contemporaries, especially ancient and medieval works from African regions other than from the Nile Valley.[3]

These divisions are also connected to the fetishisation and romanticism of specific African regions –especially during the European colonial period (ca. fifteenth-to-twentieth-century CE) – that engulfed the western imagination and gave rise to new phenomena: specifically, Egyptomania and Primitivism.[4] Egyptomania is a term designating the hyper-sensationalised consumption of Egyptian material culture from the pharaonic periods, which was often reflected in popular culture in North America and Europe, and persists even today.[5] Primitivism is a term typically used to describe tradition-based (and other) art and artistic practices of cultural communities from Africa, North and South America, and the Pacific

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Islands; these artistic outputs were especially valued in the North American and European art market during the 1920s and 1930s and within avant-garde art communities of the same period.[6] From the western artistic gaze, however, African arts were considered "primitive" and, despite being admired for their aesthetics and forms, which varied from region-to-region, the art produced in this particular region was still considered culturally and socially inferior to art created by North Americans and Europeans of the twentieth century. The western art practice of primitivism became the modern co-option of this artistic style by North American and European artists, who drew inspiration from tradition-based art of the African continent for their own work. It is important to note, however, that modern African artists engaging in tradition-based art were often excluded from the collection and display practices of modern art museums, which instead prioritised African-inspired art originating in western colonial practices.[7]

At the same time, ancient African artefacts (specifically the ancient art of Egypt and Nubia) were deliberately excluded from the classification of "primitive," as the consumption of Egypt in popular culture positioned the region on a higher cultural and artistic pedestal than its African neighbours.[8] The political and cultural partiality for Egypt ultimately affected future collection and display practices, as well as the organisation and classification methods of materials from ancient African regions within all cultural institutions, replicating the colonial rhetoric that separates this art from its African context. In this way, Egypt and Nubia are represented as ethereal and mythological collections that are disconnected from the global and historical contexts in which they arose. Similarly, collections of African art are represented as static symbols of an early twentieth-century art market that favoured tradition-based artwork exported from the colonies into the empire.[9] Collection and display approaches that classify and divide based on perennial practices, however, are outdated and incorrect; while these divisions persist, ancient and medieval African material culture are found in the collections of numerous museum departments today, such as African, Islamic, and European art. Despite the ways that African arts intersect with multiple collections and categorisations, it is uncommon to engage with these objects (and their ancient histories) from the perspectives of the peoples who made and used them. Instead, our understanding of these arts is coloured by the assumptions made by the prevalent Euro-American scholars who first studied these objects from a colonial perspective.

It is important to highlight these early collection histories in order to distance ourselves from the traditional western gaze, especially if we want to deconstruct the colonial narratives that pervaded early museum scholarship in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In doing so, we can showcase interlocking local and international histories that are rooted in the collections themselves, rather than focusing on histories that appear fixed in a specific period. Finally, ancient and medieval African art collections comprise the output of an entire continent, not just particular temporal periods, which is how certain departments are organised;

their division from other, non-ancient (or non-Egyptian) African art may insinuate that the histories of the objects are "othered" from each other.[10] This means that their histories may be individualised within a microcosm of their own temporal context, rather than reflecting cultural-historical truths that do not impose such divisions. The subjective interpretation and recording of objects in these collections by early scholars and museum professionals in collecting institutions who operated within a colonial curatorial and research paradigm has resulted in the management of these collections within western colonial rhetoric that often privileges Euro-American analysis.[11]

This chapter addresses the intrinsic issues that have settled into practice in the curation and management of ancient and medieval African collections by analysing the specific divides that have been inherited by museums. Still today, a colonial rhetoric often underlies ancient Egyptian and African art collections. This chapter offers pathways to acknowledge coloniality in museums by analysing the existing curatorial practices and collections management of institutional holdings, while also offering diverse ways to engage with material from the African continent which centre object biographies and transregional relationships – that is, the creation of what I refer to as an intersectional biography. It is also within the context of these analyses that I suggest an pre-colonial temporal expansion for the presentation of African art in new museum displays – one that includes a historically accurate survey of African art beyond the legacy of upholding the ideals of the colonial collecting period and rightly situates creative outputs from Africa within regional and global contexts. In this chapter, I focus on ongoing research that suggests a holistic examination of African art over the longue-durée, and I use ancient Nile Valley collections – specifically Egypt and Nubia – as a point of departure to question these structural issues and I offer suggestions for approaches that reconsider classification methods by expanding the presentation of objects' historical contexts.

Inherited Divides I: The Collections

Egyptian and Nubian collections are unique in their institutional organisation. Their prominence within museum collections arose out of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century popularisation, fetishisation, and exoticisation of Egypt through a European-American orientalist gaze. Much of this early interest in Egyptian and Nubian material culture stemmed from British- and European-based archaeological organisations[12] and, more recently, North American institutions.[13] Collectively, these groups popularised the investigation, collection, and exportation of Egyptian and Nubian material culture on a global scale from the nineteenth century onward.

Egyptomania in Europe was heightened through international exhibitions, such as the World's Fairs in the nineteenth and twentieth century (roughly between 1850 and 1930), which sought to promote and showcase the industrial and artistic

advancements of each nation with didactic interpretive methods, such as descriptive labels and visually striking large-scale objects.[14] The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago displayed an exhibition titled "Street in Cairo," curated by Georges Pangalo and Max Herz.[15] This interpretive display reinforced the orientalist stereotypes that were typically applied to West Asia and North Africa, emphasising western perceptions of the regions by through the inclusion of belly dancers, snake charmers, performing monkeys, mosques, and grandiose monuments, including obelisks and a recreation of the temple of Luxor.[16] This exhibition perpetuated the orientalism that permeated contemporary western culture by portraying Egypt as exotic, sensual, awesome, and decidedly other in comparison to the West, while simultaneously invoking stereotypical and romanticised notions of the Arab world.

The 1893 exhibition was decidedly marked by its framing of Egypt through an orientalist and western imperialist perspective, which constructed Egypt dualistically as both an exotic and highly esteemed colony.[17] This deliberate twofold perception also spread through early Egyptological scholarship, ultimately affecting the resulting collection and display practices of cultural institutions that housed Egyptian material culture whereby Egypt was disassociated from the rest of the world and represented by way of this orientalist aesthetic through a subtle – yet unmistakable – shift, grounded in European imperialism.[18] The disassociation and isolation of Egypt highlights the primacy of this nation's value to the British empire, manifested in the creation of a hierarchy clearly reflected in what materials were being acquired and where they would be placed in collecting institutions.

Nubian artefacts, on the other hand, have a more complex history with regards to the way they are displayed in museums. The study of ancient Nubia developed alongside Egyptology, as many early Egyptologists also undertook excavations in Sudan – given the region's proximity to and close cultural contact with Egypt – and conducted research on Nubian material culture.[19] As a result, Nubian material was often collected during archaeological missions whose focus was primarily Egyptian contexts and material culture; when these Nubian objects were accessioned into museum collections, they were simply placed into Egyptian art departments. This classification process was a direct result of the subsumption of Nubian archaeology to the larger field of Egyptology, partially on account of its geographic proximity and cultural contact with Egypt, as mentioned above. As a result, early scholarship commonly linked Egypt and Nubia, with the assumption, however, that Egypt exerted unidirectional power over Nubia; this theme was commonly emphasised in early publications on Nubian material culture.[20] The frameworks set in place during the earliest explorations of the region ultimately have had lasting implications on the way that scholars and museum professionals would perceive ancient Nubia. While Egypt is still perceived as "other" and remains on the periphery of a European "centre," it is simultaneously understood to have also contributed to western civilisation.[21] Nubia, on the other hand, is often assumed to be inferior or subsidiary to Egypt and the legacy of this interpretation

continues to foreground its collection and display practices in cultural institutions.[22] Thus, Egypt and Nubia often have a contrasting existence in museums and scholarship.

To further elaborate on the differences outlined above, romanticised notions of ancient Egypt simultaneously informed public perception of contemporary Egypt in popular culture, promulgating it as a static and ethereal entity which concurrently existed as a relic of past and as an embodiment of contemporary West Asian and North African orientalist stereotypes.[23] The early twentieth century saw renewed interests in ancient Egyptian history, archaeology, and material culture with Howard Carter's discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922.[24] During this period, the collection and display of Egyptian artefacts and human remains dominated popular media, resulting in a heightened public interest in ancient Egypt. Cultural institutions, moreover, became prolific consumers of ancient Egyptian culture, acquiring artefacts through art collectors, dealers, and archaeological missions.

The effects of this early twentieth-century wave of Egyptomania have persisted to this day, and Egyptian artefacts represent foundational examples of the "exhibitionary complex," a concept coined by Tony Bennett, in which objects are placed in a permanent and carefully curated display of knowledge.[25] Historically, the space that Egyptian history holds in cultural institutions is one that encourages higher learning, the accumulation of knowledge, and the strengthening of intellectual status, therefore perpetuating a system of intellectual "power" throughout society.[26] This system of power relates to ancient Egyptian objects because they are considered prized and exclusive, thereby strengthening the reputations and "power" of the museums that hold them, and contributing to the cultural intellect of the audiences who visit them.[27] Such notions relate back to and reinforce the hierarchisation of collections in museums: since ancient Egyptian art has been associated almost exclusively with the Mediterranean and West Asian worlds, including Europe, it thus receives higher standing than other (non-European) ancient cultures.

In many ways, the colonial scholarship produced on Egypt and Nubia in the eighteenth to early twentieth century still affects the way that museum professionals and audiences view the material culture of these regions today. As a result, Egypt is frequently presented as a unique and historically static entity in gallery and exhibition displays. Nubian artefacts, on the other hand, are either removed from their geographically African context and placed alongside (and in superficial cultural relation to) Egypt as objects of the Nile Valley, or they are otherwise relegated to displays of "sub-Saharan" Africa. In the first case, Nubian artefacts also face an additional issue in that they are typically overshadowed by Egyptian materials. In the second case, country (Egypt) and continent (Africa, including, sometimes Nubia) are separated because Egypt is placed in its ancient historical context (Mediterranean), and the galleries of Africa are seemingly placed in an historical contextual interpretation which spans the nineteenth century to the

present (Euro-colonial).[28] This reflects a carefully curated display of knowledge that renders the presentation of Africa and the Nile Valley cultures static and specifically colonial in their historical context. In bringing these issues to the forefront, we can see that the classification systems and display hierarchies relating to Egyptian, Nubia and African material culture, more broadly, are based on a perceived (imperial and cultural) centre that holds the power of interpretation – one that attaches colonial bias and assumptions upon a perceived periphery. As Smith notes, "[t]his collective memory of imperialism has been perpetuated through the ways in which knowledge about Indigenous peoples was collected, classified and then represented in various ways back to the West, and then, through the eyes of the West, back to those who have been colonized."[29]

Inherited Divides II: The Gallery Layout

I have already noted that acquisition histories and object hierarchies inform contemporary collection and display practices and, as such, galleries of ancient and contemporary African history are often separated in museum contexts. This structure is a legacy of an organisational model dating back to the establishment of cultural institutions, as well as the collection practices of African, Egyptian, and Nubian art. Specifically, hierarchical organisational approaches tended to privilege the influence of ancient Egypt on ancient Greece – the latter representing the classical tradition upon which European culture was founded. By creating permanent galleries wherein Egypt and Nubia were not physically connected to their geographically African context, they are thus visually disconnected from Africa (and often only connected to Europe via Greece); this decision ultimately affects the visual perception that museum audiences experience when they engage with the space and the objects. As such, we must remember that museums are part of an alternate foundational pedagogy that influences the knowledge acquisition of their audiences.[30] The tangible disassociation of Egypt from Africa also distorts the perception of African history as non-linear and fixed in specific time periods. Thus, the creation of physically disconnected, separate spaces ultimately influences how the public engages with these histories.[31]

Gallery layout is often also a reflection of collections management; one inherited divide naturally affects the other. Since 1982, there have been discussions of a "curation crisis" in museums, wherein an increased frequency of acquisitions contributes to a subsequent lack of continuous research conducted on the objects themselves.[32] While collection surveys are a common practice in museums, comprehensive re-evaluations of historical records occur less frequently. Re-evaluating archaeological collections, a practice underlined by Friburg and Huvila (2019) and applied in various contexts, is a management method that prioritises new research to inform and update collections whose historical records have not been regularly updated.[33] A lack of re-evaluation contributes to missed or misleading biographical information linked to specific objects, but in archaeological scholarship

ongoing excavation can yield new material and contextual discoveries that could be applied to understanding objects already housed in museum collections. The constant re-evaluation of information pertaining to objects in collections is necessary so that they remain up to date and contextually accurate; this is especially pertinent for collections that are published online, displayed in permanent galleries, or chosen for exhibition.[34] An object's accurate provenance and provenience, moreover, are fundamental to their documentation in museum databases (that will be accessed by scholars and researchers) and in displays (that will be accessed and engaged with by museum audiences). The interpretation of these objects and their display rests upon a combination of what is recorded in the museum's database and the scholarship consulted in the research process. If up-to-date information about provenience, provenance, and re-evaluation are lacking in the database, it will also be lacking in the display, resulting in the potential misinformation of the public who engage with this material.

The practice of re-evaluation can be applied not only to archaeological collections of Egypt and Nubia, but to African art collections that have been subject to problematic interpretation by cultural institutions for decades. The traditional North American display of African art is usually steeped in colonial rhetoric that infantilises, demeans, and renders static African civilisations. The result is that African cultures are often depicted as a monolith, wherein museums amalgamate complex cultures and traditions into a single ahistorical narrative.[35] What is more, African art collections are often separated from both ancient Egyptian and Nubian material culture, as well as contemporary art from African and diasporic artists, furthering the divide between various, externally imposed categories of African art. This is especially true if objects from a certain region have an intersectional biography. For example, African Red Slip pottery from Carthage in modern Tunisia, tends to be housed in ancient Greek and Roman collections because of its date (ca. first-to-fifth-century CE), instead of African art collections. Indeed, this divide is a result of organising materials in their temporal (ancient) rather than geographical context, which we already saw with material from Egypt and Nubia. Ancient histories are complex, and even though Carthage is in Africa, the region itself was settled by Phoenicians from the Eastern Mediterranean and had strong cultural influences and inhabitants from the Roman world. The decision to house Carthaginian pottery in Greek and Roman collections may hint at the selective determination of a departmental home for an object by museum staff, even if – and when – they have intersectional lives. There is also an overtone of hierarchical bias that decidedly aligns objects associated with the Roman Imperial period with Europe, the geographic region that sits at the top of the hierarchy. In the case of Red Slip pottery, the object's association with African regions is downplayed, and the object's story is told from the Roman perspective – this again suggests disassociation through the colonial rhetoric. It would make a considerable difference if the object's intersectional biography was clearly and equally acknowledged in both collections to museum audiences. Ultimately, in collections and displays, the

tangible museum space is separated from the intangible cerebral subconscious, consequently impacting knowledge production and foundational learning. Object value is often also determined in museum spaces through this historical interpretation and departmental organisation, which still classifies Egypt above Nubia and Europe above Africa.[36]

The Display of Cultural Histories in (New) Context(s)

In North America, one of the first displays to focus on ancient Nubian material of its own accord was mounted at the Brooklyn Museum (BkM) in 1978, titled *Africa in Antiquity: The Arts of Ancient Nubia and the Sudan*. This exhibition was a comprehensive survey of ancient Nubian artworks from 3000 BCE to the twelfth-century CE.[37] This installation was the first of its kind and led to several subsequent exhibitions on Nubia, including *Nubia: Egypt's Rival in Africa* presented at the Kelsey Museum in 1995 and *Ancient Nubia Now* presented at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston (MFAB) in 2019, almost forty years after the Brooklyn show.[38] *Ancient Nubia Now* displayed artefacts from ancient Nubia spanning 2400 BCE to 364 CE and, like *Africa in Antiquity* and *Nubia: Egypt's Rival in Africa,* was successful in providing a platform for exhibiting Nubian artistic achievements without the cultural authority of Egypt. The MFAB display also critically evaluated the interpretations of early scholars of Egyptian and Nubian history who had contributed to the perception of Nubia as a lesser cultural entity in relation to Egypt.[39] Additionally, the exhibition worked with Sudanese communities in Boston to inform its interpretation and included contributions from community members on their perspective of the art and history of Nubia.

Within the past five years, further examples of reformist displays of ancient African history that foreground dynamic storytelling have been presented by several museums. These displays contribute to a broader, holistic, and historically accurate presentation of African history by emphasising storytelling that brings these histories into the global historical conversation.[40] *Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time: Art, Culture, and Exchange across Medieval Saharan Africa,* organised by the Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University in 2019, is one such exhibition – a landmark presentation of trans-Saharan and trans-continental trade, exchange, and cultural interconnection that broadened the public understanding of the global medieval period. The exhibit followed the religious, cultural, and artistic spread of Islam across Africa through epigraphic materials and objects. There was a focus on archaeological "fragments" and what we can learn from them – including ceramic sherds, beads, and architectural fragments. This focal emphasis was important as it underscored what fragmented materials may tell us through careful examination and how stories could be pieced together from them to contribute to more complete and reformist histories. These fragments (e.g., a tenth-to-twelfth-century CE Qingbai porcelain from Essouk-Tadmekka in Mali) are not the typical focus of museum displays, often considered of lower priority

than their complete counterparts (e.g., a twelfth-century CE whole Qingbai porcelain bowl from China) – despite the interesting life the sherd may have led. For example, the sherd and the vessel are both likely from the royal Northern Song dynasty Jingdezhen kiln complex in China,[41] and the sherd's presence in East Africa highlights a different lived reality for the sherd than that of the vessel, although both can be used to demonstrate interconnectivity during the same historical period. Perhaps one of the most important approaches to the curation for *Caravans of Gold* was its emphasis on African regions and the African perspective in the global medieval world, told through the stories of the objects and the words of its peoples. The resulting storyline demonstrated the integral role that the continent had in connecting Europe and Asia through trade, as well as supplying new materials to trade industries. These new materials would become valued models of trans-continental taste during the medieval period, and included jewellery, toiletry boxes, and incised ivory, in addition to metal and mineral resources, such as gold and salt.[42] Highlighting ancient and medieval African kingdoms was also an integral component of the exhibition. The sites of Djenné and Timbuktu represent legacies of the powerful Mali empire centred in the Inland Niger Delta, and the exhibition dedicated a section to describing these places in detail. Highlighting objects from these sites certainly expanded the temporal representation of African art beyond the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and may have influenced alternative forms of knowledge production for exhibition visitors.

By centring narratives in historical periods other than the European colonial period (around which most museum collections of African art were built), these exhibitions challenged the dominant stereotypes of the African continent and acknowledged (often unfamiliar) complex historical processes.[43] This centring may appear unassuming, but its effects are vociferous as such exhibitions present new narratives of African history through temporally expansive representations of materials from various periods that are usually underrepresented in museum displays.

Wavering Divides: Rethinking Displays, Interdisciplinarity/ Transdisciplinarity, and Intersectional Biographies

Over the past several years, a number of exhibitions and museum displays have attempted to close the divide between static presentations of African art (ancient, late antique, medieval, and tradition based) and the rightful situation of its place and development in world history.[44] We have also witnessed changes within the structural organisation of museums themselves, including the revision of departmental titles from variations of "Arts of Africa" to "Global Africa," in order to include diasporic communities.[45] Certain titular departmental and collection designations, however, still exist due to outdated categorisations at major cultural institutions and in private collections, which often places the arts of Africa, the Pacific Islands, and the Americas together. Many of these collections were

acquired for their aesthetic appeal with little regard to their history, context, or meaning and, like many collections, the Egyptian and Nubian holdings were built from western-European and American perspectives.[46] Indeed, the traditional grouping of the Arts of Africa, the Pacific Islands, and the Americas together reflects the colonial inheritance that museums must grapple with, where imperial rhetoric on hierarchising race is clearly reflected in the original designation of these collections as "primitive" arts. The organisation of collections in such a way, moreover, subsequently treats this material culture as a monolith and the act of classification based on a superfluous hierarchy has encouraged a perception of their inferiority to European arts. Simultaneously, art from the European colonies is presented simply as exotic products or collection items from the controlled regions of imperial conquest.[47]

By maintaining this categorisation, the problematic narrative of the African continent as a still and monolithic entity, often with a singular cultural tradition as presented through superficial themes, is reinforced. These categorisations should be rethought and a more intentional approach to working with cultural collections from African regions should be adopted. This reformation must include a consistent re-evaluation of objects in collections in relation to novel methodological approaches and interpretive models.

Interdisciplinarity

Interdisciplinarity (Figure 2.1) is an approach that integrates individual disciplines into a method of practice and has been used in science research, archaeology, and museums studies for decades.[48] Interdisciplinarity may be employed as a reformist and decolonial method.[49] It may also be applied to bridge collections where objects have intersectional biographies and, in the case of ancient and medieval African collections, it can help broaden the African continent's geo-temporal representation and deconstruct the colonial authoritative voice that favours "one type" of African art in museum collections. Studying the historical processes of an entire continent and its interactions is naturally interdisciplinary. Applying concepts and methods from different disciplines will present opportunities for linking historical processes and, as a result, allow museum visitors to understand global developments more holistically. Further, the geo-temporal model ensures that presentations, whether a permanent gallery or temporary exhibition, are engaging with diverse histories learned from the biographies of objects living in African art collections, while also expanding the historical narrative for collections from Ancient Egypt and Nubia (a process already fulfilled with connections to the Mediterranean world and West Asia). Additionally, centring the perspective of the objects, and of the peoples for whom the objects represent a tangible cultural heritage, is an important decolonial curatorial change.

By focusing on these interdisciplinary and geo-temporal models, curators – as stewards of cultural heritage – should also recognise their personal limitations

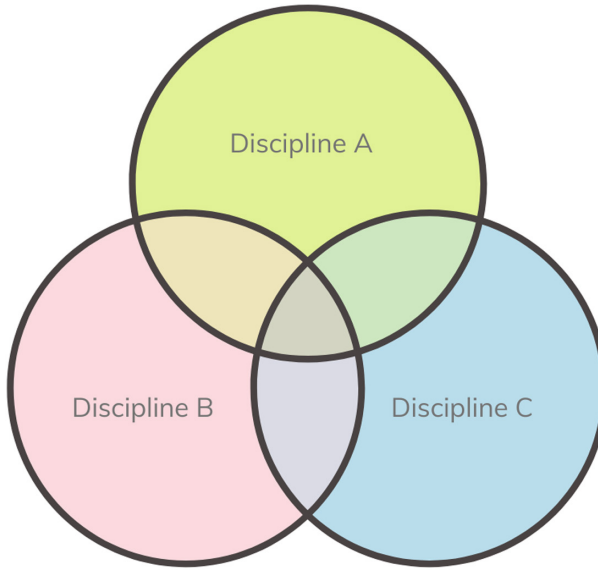

FIGURE 2.1 Interdisciplinarity (firm borders, shared concepts and methods; adapted from Darian-Smith and McCarty 2016, 5).

in curating material culture (and its accompanying knowledge) that is not their own. For example, in describing setbacks to understanding the ancient Nubian capital city and kingdom of Meroe as a major ancient civilisation, Elzain lists the "development of theories and methods of archaeology in Europe and America, which are then applied to African countries without trying to understand the distinctiveness and particularities of each culture."[50] In collections of both ancient Egyptian and African art, moreover, there has been a consistent construction of histories without including the interpretations of the descendants themselves;[51] instead, we need to consider a community-centred approach. In this way, African and diasporic communities can work with and be involved in the presentation of their own artistic heritage.

Transdisciplinarity

Beyond the interdisciplinary approach is transdisciplinarity, a practice in which there are no boundaries between disciplines and they do not need to be neighbouring for practitioners to identify, integrate, and understand relationships between them.[52] Transdisciplinarity (Figure 2.2) is participatory in nature, and there are always multiple stakeholders in the knowledge-making process[53] – in the context of this chapter, African and diasporic communities. In this way, the practice avoids a sole authoritative voice. Transdisciplinarity also encourages alternative ways of

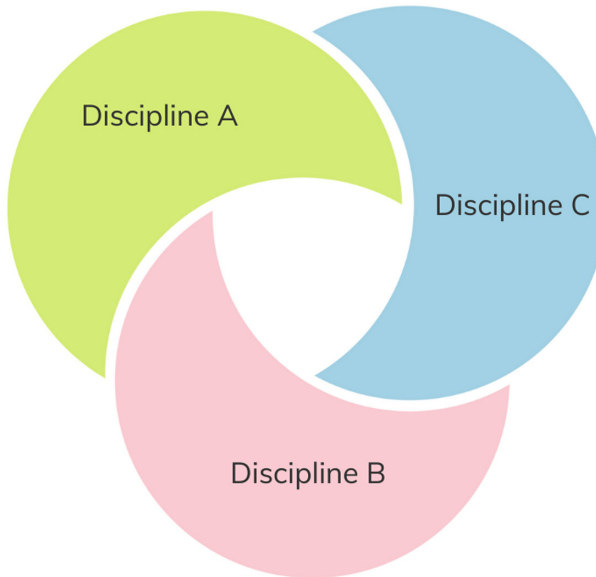

FIGURE 2.2 Transdisciplinarity (absence of borders, fluid, new frameworks; adapted from Scholz and Steiner 2015a, 529 and 534).

understanding objects and histories that involve their presentation from their specific contexts rather than a European-American framework.[54] If museum displays incorporated inter- and transdisciplinarity to their collections, they would have an opportunity to present the ancient voice through objects and the people who made them (epigraphy, literature, materials, technology) and through the voices of descendant communities today. In this way, displays would actively present counternarratives to officious interpretations.[55] In the context of recognising knowledge pluralities, Silverman acknowledges there are "[m]ultiple epistemologies, multiple ways of knowing."[56] Through transdisciplinarity, indigenous knowledge takes precedence. Thus, the development of new – or, rather, recentred – ways of thinking about and seeing collections is innate through both interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches.

Finally, a reconsideration of both object and collection hierarchies should be applied to curatorial practices of cultural materials. The hierarchical organisation of these collections and the objects within them contribute to maintaining European and Western structures of knowledge and do not fully consider the historical contexts that have relegated some materials as inferior to others within a museum setting. By understanding an object's intersectional biography, we can broaden historical representation in museums and present diverse stories to our audiences. A temporal shift, moreover, which considers African art across the

longue durée may offer opportunities to consider these arts as part of a continuous history, rather than reinforcing the colonial narratives that treat this material culture as static and separate. Simpson rightly states that, "[e]xhibitions concerning traditional or tribal societies have frequently been criticised for their failure to show them as dynamic, living cultures. Rather, they portray them as they were seen in the past, thereby giving the impression either that the cultures had indeed vanished, as many Europeans in the late nineteenth century had believed they would, or that their lifestyles persist, unaltered, in the manner of their nineteenth-century ancestors."[57] Decentring the colonial bias in the study and display of African arts from their ancient to modern contexts is already a step towards rethinking collection and display practices today.

Conclusions

New curatorial approaches to exhibiting African art (from all time periods) should challenge the traditional colonial frameworks that pervade contemporary museums.[58] The impact that the colonial period of collecting had on the development of departments in collecting institutions resulted in the inherited divides that are maintained in these institutions today. These divides are legacies of European-American systems of knowledge that themselves boast hierarchies that prioritise the material cultures of ancient and medieval collections. These hierarchies are longstanding, and the divides are almost unwavering; both can be tangibly and intangibly experienced through institutional gallery layout and displays.

Confronting the legacies of collecting during periods of European colonialism, including recognising the impacts of Egyptomania on Egypt and Nubia and the formation of Primitivism in relation to African art collections, sheds light on issues that have persisted in classifying the material culture from African collections and highlights the dichotomy between colonial bias and proper representations of historical realities. Africa did not develop in a microcosm and is equally part of global historical progression. The appropriate acknowledgement of the ancient contexts of these materials in museum collections is now common, but recognising that these departmental organisations are simultaneously colonial and were strategically separated by early scholars working within the colonial rhetoric is paramount, if we are to move the field forward. Acknowledging intersectional biographies and employing methodological approaches like interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity can present new, decolonial ways of approaching the diachronic study of African art.[59] The ontological nature of this chapter is guided by approaches that may be used to place the conventional colonial viewpoint on the margins. At the centre are the cultural legacies of the objects and the perspectives of descendant communities. These approaches present an opportunity to truly redefine how museum audiences understand African art and repair the cognitive dissonance existing between divided disciplines; from the position and viewpoint of a scholar of the ancient and medieval worlds, this potential for curatorial mending

embraces organising displays that incumbently centre African and diasporic perspectives as well as the actual histories of objects in these collections.

Notes

1 I recognise my positionality in this discussion as a Canadian and Caribbean scholar of African descent working in North America and within the context of North American museums. The reception of African histories in western museums have traditionally been cast in a stereotypical representation initiated – typically – by white male curators. My position presents an alternate perspective with which to approach collection and display practices of African and diasporic art through the case of ancient collections. As Colla (2007, 21) writes, "[w]hile conducting my research, I was constantly reminded of the fact that ancient Egypt and its material culture have meant to many things to so many people of the years" and thus I also acknowledge that this chapter is not making a claim to ancient Egyptian material culture, but a consideration of the colonial bias often brought to its management in western museums. I would also like to urge that we #KeepEyesOnSudan. With positivity and sincerity, I am hoping for an imminent end to the critical situation.

2 Object biographies as an analytical framework have been used in both museum studies and archaeology since first being introduced by Kopytoff in his 1986 essay *The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process*. This framework suggests that an object experiences a life through its use in its communities as well as the value it accrues in society. In this instance, referring to an object biography may refer to the consideration that a museum makes for a dinar from Morocco being accessioned into either "Islamic art" or "African art" collections as its intersectional object biography is both geographically and culturally African and culturally and religiously Islamic.

3 See Reid (2011) for a discussion on the often-discounted focus on precolonial African works and histories in academic and curatorial contexts. See also Dumouchelle (2013) for a broader and brief discussion on exhibiting African art and Karp and Kratz (2020) for a discussion on exhibiting cultures and cultural authority in museums.

4 Pasquier 2007.

5 Colla 2007, 18–19, 21; Humbert 2015, 465–67; Stevenson 2019, 150. The Western fascination by and interest in ancient Egypt are noticeable through different forms of popular culture, especially in film and literature.

6 Rothko 2006, 105. The avant-garde was a nineteenth- and twentieth-century art movement that sought to create distinct, innovative, and original works that pushed and questioned the limits of the art world at the time.

7 Goldwater 1986; Rubin 1984; Rothko 2006, 106–08. See also the exhibition *"Primitivism" in the 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern* presented at the Museum of Modern Art in 1984 which drew upon this artistic conceptual practice, while simultaneously assuming the superiority of western art (archive: https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1907).

8 Ancient Nubia was a powerful civilisation that developed along the Nile valley from the late fourth millennium BCE until the sixth-century CE. Its ancient borders spanned the joining of the White and Blue Nile in the south (modern-day Khartoum, Sudan) and extended towards Aswan, Egypt in the north. Nubia's topography was largely altered in the modern period after the construction of the Aswan Dam in 1960, which flooded parts of its northern region (Hassan 2007, 75–76; 79–80).

9 I regularly mention "tradition-based" throughout this chapter to designate works that are made to be used according to the traditions of a specific culture or civilisation. These works form the basis of many African art collections worldwide and can

commonly range from apotropaic works, such as Central and West African power figures, to diverse outfits, including the facial or helmet masks associated with masquerades that are performed across the continent.

10 Smith 2021, 51–52.

11 See Abd el-Gawad, this volume, for a discussion of coloniality in modern scholarship and museum practices.

12 These organisations include (but are not limited to) the Egypt Exploration Society (EES; founded in 1882 as the Egypt Exploration Fund [EEF]) and l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale (IFAO; founded in 1880), which led to subsequent missions by German entities (first under Karl Richard Lepsius to Egypt and Sudan). Ali 2015, 4–5; Vos and Gertzen 2020, 3.

13 Notably, the Pennsylvania Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston joint missions at Meroe, Nuri and Jebel Barkal; the University of Calgary and the Royal Ontario Museum joint mission with the University of Khartoum); non-Egyptian African universities, including the universities of Ghana, Khartoum, and Cape Town; and East Asian organisations such as the joint Egyptian-Chinese Academy of Social Sciences mission at the Montu Temple in Luxor, to name only a few.

14 Ormos 2009, 1–17; Delamaire 2003, 123–34. Ormos 2017, 123.

15 This World's Fair was in celebration of the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' (Cristobal Colón) arrival in the "New World" (Ormos 2009).

16 *The Dream City. A portfolio of photographic views of the World's Columbian Exposition* 1893; Ormos 2012; Delemaire 2003, 130. Ormos 2017, 119. See also Bryan (2003, 198–99) in reference to the "Crypte des Pharaons" at Luna Park in Paris in 1907.

17 Said 1978, 1–4, 7–8.

18 Riggs 2013, 68–70.

19 See Breasted 1908; Woolley and Randall-MacIver 1910; Petrie 1895; Adams 1978; Dunham 1950, 1952, 1955, 1957, and 1963 for discussions of early scholarship in Egypt and Sudan. More recent work in the field (and related disciplines) has expanded to include critical and reflective engagement with archaeology, memory, and heritage and these changes are largely spearheaded by Egyptian, Nubian and Sudanese scholars.

20 This is especially apparent in considerations of Egyptian influences on Nubian art and society. See Reisner 1910; Edwards 2004, 5, 7–9; and O'Connor 1993.

21 Abd el-Gawad and Stevenson 2021, 122; Karp 1991, 13–14.

22 See O'Connor (1993) for a seminal revision of this interpretation.

23 See the contribution by Abd el-Gawad in this volume and Abd el-Gawad and Stevenson 2021.

24 Colla 2007, 176, 190–98; Stevenson 2019, 145–46.

25 Bennett 1988, 74–75.

26 Bennett 1988, 74–75.

27 Colla 2007, 18. Additionally, viewing these objects in museum contexts could be suggested to have contributed to the social identities of these individuals, marking them out as members of the educated class. See Humbert (2015, 465–66) for a mention of the "Grand Tour," a regional tour for European elites to explore European sites of the ancient past and the objects collected by their highly valued colonies in terms of cultural hierarchy which included Egypt. The tour also contributed to Egyptomania in Europe where ancient Egyptian-inspired architecture was infused into the tour. See also Curl (1937), Maisels (1991, 5–6) and Tythacott and Arvanitis (2014, 3).

28 Although the contextual history of African art is presented between these periods, the primary focus of display is still heavily focused on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As this chapter explains, this is because of the colonial collecting period where an intensification in the interest of tradition-based African art began to drive the western art market as a result of art export from colony to empire (e.g., Belgian Congo to Belgium) in the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties (Biro 2013; Biro and Thiaw

2020). This was an occurrence both archaeologically and within living communities across African regions.

29 Smith 2021, 1. This discussion initially centred on Indigenous collections, but it can also be applied to African collections.

30 Hooper-Greenhill 1999, 9–10.

31 Hooper-Greenhill (1999, 9–10) notes that "[k]nowledge is now well understood as the commodity that museums offer […] museums and galleries can alter perceptions and contribute to knowledge."

32 Barker 2010, 293–308; Kersel 2015, 77–80.

33 Connah 1981; Marquardt et al. 1982, 409–18; Dornburg et al. 2011, 255–72.

34 Turner 2020, 4–13, 125–27, 158. These are also maintained through "legacy data." Legacy data is the result of the transition of earlier object records to a digitised database in the late 1960s and early 1970s. I add that re-evaluation often did not take place and the replication of colonial research paradigms were maintained. See Turner (2020) for more on the legacies of colonialism in object records and the ongoing maintenance of misinformed data on objects in museum collections, as well as a critique on how current practices in collections documentation reinforce colonial knowledge-making infrastructures.

35 These are most demonstrated in thematic displays that group one type of object (e.g., weaponry, masks, etc.) that visually presents as a monolith. This practice is uncommon in displays of other tradition-based collections, such as Arts of Asia which is commonly organised by country rather than object type. This organisation may seem subtle, but the subtlety becomes palpable in subconscious learning where the visitor actively learns that Asia is a continent with multiple countries and cultures despite potentially having a similar artistic aesthetic, rather than a "place" with similar objects.

36 I have referenced this short-sightedness in museum gallery layouts that separate African art collections from Egyptian and Nubian collections, and discussed the epistemic impact of presenting cultures on specific floors that reinforce colonial hierarchies (e.g., at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the MFA Boston, and the British Museum) in my lectures *Facing Display Practices in Ancient African Collections* (2022), *The Unwavering Divide: Collection and Display Practices in Ancient African Collections* in (2022; 2023), and *Collective Histories: Display Practices of Ancient African Collections* (2023), as well as my doctoral thesis (Malvoisin 2024). See also Derbew (2022, 61) for a reference of the Arts of Africa galleries presented in the basement at the British Museum and Purdy and Arico (2024) for a review of galleries that have connected Egypt and Nubia collections with African art collections.

37 See the archive of *Africa in Antiquity: The Arts of Ancient Nubia and the Sudan* at the Brooklyn Museum (https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/exhibitions/760).

38 See the travelling *Nubia: Treasures of Ancient Africa* in 2018 presented at MFAB, *Nubia – Land of the Black Pharaohs* at the Drents Museum in 2019, *Pharaoh of the Two Lands: The African Story of the Kings of Napata* presented at the Louvre in 2022. See also *Narrating Nubia: The Social Lives of Heritage* held at the University of Michigan Humanities Collaboratory in 2023, a collaborative research project that prioritised community involvement in the development and interpretive process.

39 See the archive of *Ancient Nubia Now* at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston (https://www.mfa.org/exhibitions/nubia).

40 Similarly, Baxandall (1991, 40–41) maintains that an intercultural presentation in museums is helpful for creating a cultural relativism between cultural objects on display and the cultural disposition of the viewer, but I argue that this intercultural presentation can be used as a method to reintegrate marginalised histories back into the global historical conversation.

41 Berzock 2019, 29–30. Zhao 2015, 23–25, 29–34. See Berzock (2019) for more detailed inclusion of fragments exhibited and studied for the exhibition.

42 Berzock 2019.
43 See also *Sahel*: *Art and Empires on the Shores of the Sahara* (2020) and *Africa and Byzantium* (2023) presented at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
44 E.g., the permanent galleries of African art at the Newark Museum, the Yale Art Gallery, Nelson-Atkins Museum, and the Cleveland Museum of Art, keeping in mind that this list is not comprehensive and does not include museums currently undergoing gallery reinstallations. In addition, the University of Michigan Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum, Newark Museum, Gardiner Museum, Bard Graduate Center, Museum of Modern Art, Neuberger Museum of Art, Art Gallery of Ontario, and Tate Modern, to name a few, are examples of recent innovative iterations of contemporary African and global diasporic art exhibits and new ways of looking, which should also be considered when curating displays. See also *Egypt in Africa* (1996) presented at the Indianapolis Museum of Art.
45 For instance, both the Royal Ontario Museum and the Newark Museum bear the departmental titles "Global Africa," while the Minneapolis Institute of Art renamed its department "Arts of Global Africa." The Art institute of Chicago, on the other hand, includes Egyptian Art in the "Arts of Africa" department.
46 Mark 1999, 7.
47 Van Beurden 2013, 473–74, 483.
48 Hooper-Greenhill 2000, 103–104; Cameron and Mengler 2015, 193–94, 202; Scholz and Steiner 2015a; Scholz and Steiner 2015b, 529; Prutyla, Schröder, and Meig 2019, 116; Hodge and Kreps 2024; Thum and Miller 2024.
49 Decoloniality works against coloniality by the epistemic "delinking" from colonial authority (Mignolo 2011, 45; see also Mignolo 2007). Decoloniality is referred to here as a praxis that not only critiques epistemic and foundational Eurocentric positions of power but works towards counterhegemonic approaches to put concept into application (Walsh 2018, 15–32). See Mignolo and Walsh 2018.
50 Elzain 2009, 40.
51 Colla 2007, 12–13.
52 Cameron and Mengler 2015, 194; Nicolescu 2010, 19–23; Stutz 2018, 52.
53 Scholz and Steiner 2015a, 527–30. See also Scholz and Steiner 2015b.
54 Darian-Smith and McCarty, 2016, 3–7; Stutz 2018, 53–54.
55 Miles 2019, 254–58; Hodge and Kreps 2024, 177–79. See case studies by Gómez and Clark 2024.
56 Silverman 2015, 3.
57 Simpson 2001, 35.
58 E.g., *Ancient Nubia Now* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, *African Ancestors of Egypt and Nubia: From the Green Sahara to the Nile* at the Brooklyn Museum, *The African Origin of Civilization* and *Africa and Byzantium* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and *The Language of Beauty in African Art* at the Art Institute of Chicago. Also, the collection activation *Ways of the Cross in Africa* in the Medieval Art galleries at the Metropolitan Museum of Art explores the spread of Christianity across medieval and modern Africa and Europe through an assortment of crosses (https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2021/african-origin-of-civilization/africa-installations-across-the-met).
59 This method may also be applied to other cultural collections with objects that also have intersectional biographies.

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3

RESPECT, RECOGNITION, AND REMATRIATION

An Indigenous Egyptian Perspective on Meaningful Public Discourse on the Middle East and North Africa

Heba Abd el-Gawad

Positionality and Terminology

First and foremost, this chapter is not intended to attack or point fingers; rather, it is an appeal for allyship and empathy. Many of the colonial biases and structural injustices discussed here are so deeply entrenched within the knowledge production processes surrounding the ancient societies of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) that they have become normalised.[1] It is our collective responsibility to reflect on our positionality and responsibilities with regard to the continuing legacies of colonialism entrenched in current practices. In this view, I am sharing my frustrations equally as both a professional and as a member of the MENA community, who has been on the receiving end of many racial and ethnic attacks, microaggressions, and misrepresentations. I am aware that changing how MENA is perceived or represented requires a wider socio-political movement, yet since many people first encounter MENA in a museum or history curriculum, I believe that change starts with those of us who produce knowledge for public consumption.

It is also important to acknowledge at the outset that I am writing this chapter from an Egyptian, Indigenous, female standpoint. As Egyptian feminist theorist and activist Nawal el Saadwy has argued, the Indigenous MENA women's perspective is shaped by how patriarchy, imperialism, capitalism, and Eurocentrism interconnect and oppress their ways of seeing, doing, and being.[2] These oppressors situate MENA women in different power relations and affect our individual social, political, historical, and material conditions. In this vein, my standpoint is the product of my personal and professional lived experience as an Egyptian woman researching my cultural heritage within institutions and academic spaces, which

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have structurally discriminated against my community's right to Indigeneity and cultural heritage. In these spaces, I am both the researcher and the researched.

As an Egyptian, colonialism and Eurocentrism are not simply intellectual concepts to critique and challenge, but oppressing realities that I encounter on an ongoing basis. Similarly, I interact with colonial violence constantly in archival documents; academic, institutional, and digital spaces; museums; embassies, as I apply for visas; and at border controls. My lived experience is not, of course, the universal Egyptian female experience. Rather, it represents one of the diverse experiences of Egyptians and MENA communities. My perspectives are shaped by my individual knowledge, my family's cultural and social background, and the collective community in which I live in Cairo. By acknowledging my positionality, I am attempting to fulfil my self-reflective ethical obligation towards my communities and those who wish to interact with my contribution. I am conscious of how this positionality has influenced my research process, interpretations, word choices, biases, and subjectivity. I invite the readers to reflect on their own positionality as they engage with this contribution.

This chapter is addressed to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers and practitioners, as the same concerns regarding knowledge creation arise for both. A core difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers is their motivation; most Indigenous scholars engage in researching their own culture to bring benefit to their communities. Additionally, Indigenous researchers are confronted with an added set of complexities shaped by their lived experience in the academy. Among these complexities is the "Indemic" nature of Indigenous researchers, whereby their Indigenous culture, identity, and community intersect with "Endemic" institutional norms and practices.[3] Usually, Indigenous researchers will feel a responsibility to protect their communities from the exploitation and extraction of the institutions they represent. These scholars need to resist being made complicit in their own exploitation and exclusion by institutions at the structural and epistemological levels. This is not to suggest that Indigenous researchers or practitioners should be held to lesser professional or ethical standards, but to highlight the greater responsibility they bear, while often simultaneously having little institutional power.

The Coloniality of Public Engagement with MENA's Past

> I have always felt there was something wrong with the way we present Egyptian antiquities. It is seen through the eyes of the other rather than our Egyptian eyes. We seem to convey Western point of view not ours.[4]

Is it possible for public engagement with the ancient cultures of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to be recolonising? The short answer is, yes. Knowledge production and public dissemination of the region's past initially grew out of its colonial occupation and, I argue, scholarship continues to adopt a Eurocentric

Orientalist approach towards ancient and contemporary MENA communities. While today's modern MENA states have full control over the access and management of their cultural heritage, colonial practices still define the power structures of knowledge production and dissemination. At the heart of this built-in coloniality is the strict ancestral, cultural, and intellectual segregation between ancient MENA societies and modern communities, through disciplinary practices.

Whose interests are served by the knowledge produced on ancient MENA societies and engagement practices thereof? While there has been interest in the decolonial turn in the various disciplines governing ancient MENA societies, little has been done to challenge the coloniality of public knowledge production and engagement practices in policy and practice within MENA communities themselves.[5] Thus, the primary aim of this chapter is to offer, for the first time, a critical assessment of the coloniality of the MENA public discourse and issue a call to approach the region's histories from a settler-colonial perspective.

The use of the term coloniality, instead of colonialism, in this chapter deliberately echoes Maldonado-Torres' urge to focus on colonial ways of seeing, knowing, and doing (i.e., coloniality), which survive beyond military and administrative "colonialism."[6] I argue that coloniality has three dimensions in the process of knowledge production for MENA ancient societies: an epistemic dimension, a structural dimension, and an ethical/moral dimension. The epistemic dimension is readily visible in how ancient MENA societies are, usually, depicted in the public discourse – that is, as Western, monolithic ("frozen") concepts focused on timeless material culture that is divorced from succeeding historical layers. This material culture is then presented in Orientalist oppositions, in which ancient societies are aligned with the modern West, while present-day MENA communities are associated with the East; in this model, the conservative East is deemed inferior to the progressive West.[7] These engagements replicate the nineteenth-century travellers, explorers, archaeologists, and writers' colonial extraction and exploitation of the region's heritage.[8] This framework also perpetuates the domestication of MENA ancient cultures within Western-European frames of knowledge and simultaneously appropriates them as narratives for the development of Western civilisation.[9] Eurocentric ways of classifying, interpreting, and understanding, then, serve to sustain a "universal knowledge," and ultimately uphold and invest in the power that institutions and societies in the Global North hold over MENA's past.

This epistemic violence of Eurocentrism has also enforced a knowledge dislocation from contemporary communities. According to disciplinary classifications, contemporary communities are tied to the landscape, but not to the ancient societies who occupied these territories. Thus, their relationship to these pasts is one of geographical proximity; modern communities simply happen to occupy the land that was once inhabited by the ancient peoples who cultures are of interest to the West.[10] Within this "othering" lens, MENA communities are considered neither Indigenous nor source communities. As a result, they do not uphold Indigenous rights to knowledge produced regarding their heritage, their knowledge systems

are not used to better understand their ancient predecessors, and neither researchers nor practitioners are held accountable to them.[11]

This structural inequity is exemplified in how knowledge production remains centred in the Global North, which is a direct reflection of the disciplinary power structures and misdistribution of economic and academic capital.[12] While there has been a recent, reinvigorating wave that centres the contributions of local practitioners, knowledge production is still largely uni-directional and institutions in the Global North shape disciplinary priorities and validities.[13] This is evident in the dominance of Global North research institutes, publication presses, and academic journals, which collectively hold the upper hand in the politics of publishing and are perceived as more academically credible. Citation power, moreover, also rests within the Global North, especially when we consider the Arabic language barrier.[14] Ironically, mastering foreign languages is an essential research requirement for MENA researchers, yet learning Arabic with its varying dialects is not a requirement to enrol in a Global North (under)graduate course or to pursue research or participate in archaeological excavations in the region. Entire careers could be built without mastering – or even attempting to learn – the local language. This is reflected in the library shelves dedicated to ancient MENA, which are packed with books in languages reflecting the disciplinary colonial histories. As a result, the knowledge produced and disseminated in Arabic is, largely, dismissed.

In all of this, communities have no voice on the research that directly impacts them, while outsiders, on the other hand, are obtaining information from and building careers based on their land and histories. Excavation and field research can still take place with little or no interaction with communities, including those who live near or on excavation sites. Rarely is the produced knowledge shared with communities in formats accessible to them, nor do they have a say in the what, why, or how of research questions. Most importantly, communities' knowledge systems and ways of being, seeing, or doing are not considered to be Indigenous methodologies that can help to better understand the MENA past. Their knowledge of the land, environment, local languages, and cultures are, thus, lost to Eurocentric opinions regarding what constitutes culture and what is worthy of saving. Within this top-down extractive framing, MENA communities have responsibilities to these ancient societies, but no rights. They are the local translators, facilitators, inspectors, excavators, and informants. They are the "known" but never the "knowers."[15]

The ethical dimension of coloniality can be seen in current approaches to public engagement within museums and excavation sites where MENA communities are not accorded an Indigenous status, nor are they prioritised. For example, archaeological excavations' public engagement programmes are designed to educate or raise the awareness of the local communities, with the typical overall aim of heritage protection or capacity building.[16] Thus, communities are being educated rather than serving as the educators. These engagement practices tend to be an add-on, fringe activity left to the discretion of researchers, rather than an expected

ethical obligation. Although more recently, as public impact has, since the 2011 revolutions, become an integral funding requirement for local economic development, more archaeological public engagement programmes have been introduced throughout the region.[17] Whether this shift is rooted in spurious motives (e.g., to secure additional funding) or in a genuine ethical corrective turn to bring overdue social justice, remains to be seen.

The colonial Othering that currently frames public discourse on MENA ancient societies is not simply a pedagogical or practical failure, but it has serious repercussions for rendering MENA communities invisible. This is apparent in how ancient MENA heritage is perceived as orphaned, with no relation to the modern nations who, in turn, have no right to claim it or contest its interpretations.[18] Thus, MENA, as contemporary Indigenous communities, are excluded from current heritage repatriation debates. A striking example of the omission of North African collections from repatriation debates is the applauded Savoy-Sarr African Collections repatriation report, commissioned by the French government, which centred the need for reconciliation and restitution of African collections in French and wider European institutions, but did not include North African materials as part of wider African collections.[19]

The public discourse that results from these exclusionary practices has an authoritative effect as it shapes how communities see themselves compared to others – "others" include, in this case, ancient people who lived in the shared geographic regions of modern MENA nations. For example, the erasure and the silencing of selected modern community groups in contrast to the reverence for ancient material culture can be seen in the strikingly different Western-European governments' responses to Graeco-Roman heritage destruction in Syria during the Syrian war compared to the refugee crisis. In 2015, Boris Johnson, then mayor of London, was raising a replica of Palmyra's Arch of Triumph in Trafalgar Square after its destruction by Daesh, while the Home Secretary Theresa May was simultaneously promising to restrict the numbers of Syrian refugees that the UK would receive. When European governments were confronted with a choice between heritage and MENA lives, heritage always won, as the post-2011 unfinished revolutions have attested. However, it is important to point out that not all MENA heritage was seen as worthy of protection; outcry was reserved only for the layers of MENA history appropriated by the West and with which the Eurocentric gaze can find affinity. Other multicultural and multiethnic layers of heritage and architecture received no mourning.[20] In this respect, the invented segregation between ancient and contemporary societies reinforced the longstanding colonial and racial interpretations of MENA culture, people, and politics, costing modern inhabitants of these regions their lives and memories.

How can we end this colonising cycle and ensure that knowledge produced and disseminated about ancient MENA societies brings no harm to contemporary communities? In the following section, I build the argument for a settler colonial consideration of MENA that emphasises the ethical responsibility of researchers to the region and its past and present communities.

MENA Settler-Colonialism: From Engagement to Responsibility

> Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.[21]

While directed at states, the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples Rights (UNDIPR) has been increasingly used by researchers of Indigenous studies as an ethical guideline to prevent harm to Indigenous communities and their lands.[22] But who counts as Indigenous? How is it measured? And who gets to decide? Indigenous rights and research responsibilities towards them remain largely controlled by settler-colonial power structures, wherein settler states continue to exercise their sovereignty over Indigenous lands. Given this bias, MENA communities – despite the rich literature on the region's settler colonial status – remain peripheral to settler colonial studies, as well as to broader definitions of settler colonialism and understandings of how its legacies still shape politics and social life today.[23]

This unjustified marginalisation of the MENA region with regard to Indigenous rights can be attributed to three main causes. First, settler colonial studies tend to ignore the MENA region, focusing instead on the Anglophone settler societies of North America, Australasia, and South Africa. Thus, MENA remains a blind spot within settler colonial ancient culture studies and wider anthropological studies. However, settler colonialism has targeted countries throughout MENA and these endeavours were crucial to developing a transnational network of settler-colonial ideas and practices. Rather than being marginal to the global history of settler colonialism, MENA was crucial to the long-term evolution of settler colonies around the globe.[24]

The second cause is the temporality of settler-colonialism in MENA. Settler-colonialism has a long past and continues to shape the present either through direct occupation – as is the case of Ceuta and Melilla on the Moroccan Mediterranean coast or in Palestine – or direct Western European military interventions and bases, resources control, or cultural appropriation and epistemic violence, which will likely continue in the future. All of these have contributed to the normalisation of coloniality in MENA to the extent that it became unnoticeable.

The third significant cause of marginalised indigeneity in MENA is the Eurocentric privileging of genealogical descent, which continues to be the sole legitimator of communities' relationships to ancient societies.[25] In this context, MENA communities are perceived as more recent settlements within local proximity to tangible ancient heritage that is of Western-European interest. The

connection between modern communities and ancient MENA societies is one of shared geography rather than a shared cultural, emotional, or socio-political lived experience. The impact of this single-sided perception of genealogy and identity goes far beyond the case of MENA and affects other marginalised and culturally occupied communities around the world. Local and Indigenous are not neutral terms and should not be used interchangeably. To reduce Indigenous communities to local is to deny their colonial trauma and their historic and continuing marginalisation.

Communities reserve the right to self-determine their identity, their connections to the land, and the ancient societies with whom they identify. For example, Egyptian geopolitical scholar Gamal Hamdan (1928–1993) defined Egypt as the "possessor of middle ground," or "*malekat el-7ad el-Awsat*";[26] its people cannot fit into a single "race" or culture as Egyptians belong to many cultures, given the long history of colonialism which has shaped their multi-layered identity today. Egyptian Indigeneity, in his view, is rooted in the connection between land and lived experience. Therefore, Egyptians possess not only ancestral links with their ancient predecessors, but equally strong emotional connections. Through these geopolitical, ancestral, and emotional links "they can feel ancient Egypt better than any Western scholar."[27]

Public discourse on MENA ancient cultures, which has the potential to function as a social justice resource, has failed to recognise and repair the violence of this coloniality. Through passive top-down practices and initiatives, scholarship and public discourse alike continue to characterise MENA communities as inferior knowledge recipients rather than as Indigenous knowledge holders. This is evident in the many public engagement training and capacity-building initiatives introduced within Eurocentrically defined archaeological sites throughout the region over the past decade amid the Arab spring.[28] While in the diaspora, MENA communities received training in UK and German museums to offer guided tours to visitors.[29] Whether at the local archaeological site or at European museums, MENA communities are invited to be educated rather than educate – an approach that would be unimaginable with Indigenous communities in Australia, Canada, or the United States.

When MENA communities' rights are acknowledged by providing translations of knowledge produced on their ancient cultures, they are, usually, offered in formal classical Arabic.[30] Classical Arabic translations have an immediate distancing effect as they ignore the local dialects and their interconnectedness with verbal and emotional perceptions and interpretations of heritage. Through these translations, MENA communities are, thus, painted as a homogenous collective. This is particularly harmful to the multiethnic and multicultural minority groups within the region. Although the challenges of inequality and discrimination are shared, their effects may be felt differently between different sub-groups. While attempts to include contemporary MENA communities in the public discourse surrounding their heritage is a welcomed change, by ignoring MENA rights to indigeneity and

their knowledge systems, these practices end up reinforcing power imbalances and promoting colonial assimilation.

The choice to use classical Arabic can lead to mistranslations and misrepresentations and is representative of how public discourse on MENA ancient cultures is typically developed backwards, in that it primarily responds to Western-European disciplinary and public needs and priorities, rather than those of MENA communities. Providing classical Arabic on a museum label responds to the European museum's desire to appear more inclusive. In an archaeological context, in contrast, excavations tend to operate in total isolation from urban, agricultural, and socio-cultural needs on the ground. The selection of sites to be excavated and research questions to be asked are typically determined by gaps in the disciplinary knowledge of ancient societies. Interpretations of the imagined East are then subsequently imposed on contemporary MENA communities. This is due to the assumed superiority of Western-European ways of knowing, being, and doing, which leads to the view that Eurocentric scholarship produces universal knowledge that is universally relevant.[31]

Knowledge production and its dissemination can bring harm to communities. How knowledge is produced, why, and for whose benefit affects communities' rights to self-determination and sovereignty over their identities and histories. Harm can be done either by marginalising communities' needs and knowledge from research or even by subtle acts, such as referring to archaeological sites as "my sites" or Indigenous excavators as "my workmen" or using the term "discovery" while ignoring Indigenous existing knowledge. Such acts can easily go unnoticed, but they do reinforce the coloniality of the power structure of practices and policies.

Researchers have a responsibility to ensure communities exercise their rights, power, and authority to determine what, how, and why research happens on their land. They can implement this responsibility through the interrelated spheres of control, influence, and interest. A researcher's control lies in the power and privilege they hold by deciding where, when, how, and why their research is carried out, at all research stages from design to delivery. The researcher's sphere of influence is located at the institutional level. Here, researchers might not have direct control, but they can influence research ethics and change how knowledge is produced at the curriculum level, by contributing to or chairing committees, and by pushing for reform at the structural level. Beyond their spheres of control and influence, lies the researcher's sphere of interest, where decisions such as co-producing their research with communities or responding to local needs rather than disciplinary gaps, can lead to policy decision-making or shaping public opinion, all of which can effect social, political, cultural, economic, and environmental changes. How much researchers can affect the spheres of control, influence, and interest depends on their individual values, autonomy, and positionality.

Three Considerations for a Meaningful Indigenous Public Discourse: Respect, Recognition, and Rematriation

I propose the introduction of three "threshold" considerations through which researchers on ancient MENA societies (and beyond) can fulfil their responsibilities towards modern communities. I believe these considerations can contribute to ethical and meaningful knowledge production and public discourse dissemination. I refer to these considerations as a "threshold" because, in my view, they must be considered before any research question, relationship, or public communication is attempted. I also believe that these conditions should be reviewed throughout the knowledge production and dissemination process.

Respect of Self-Determination and Consent

Knowledge produced and disseminated on ancient MENA societies is, I argue, of little to no benefit to contemporary MENA communities and, in many cases, causes harm. Harm is inflicted by reinforcing their invisibility or reaffirming power imbalances that serve neo-colonial practices and policies. These harms include lack of reciprocity, such as extracting knowledge on material culture or sites without any benefit to the community; lack of community-informed consent and coproduction before research is attempted or disseminated; and misinterpretations of community-based research ethics and policies.

Ensuring that research is respectful to communities and of benefit to them requires fundamental changes in the ways that research is designed and conducted. A key manifestation of this respect is to allow communities to determine what and how knowledge is produced on their land. Researchers need to create opportunities for communities to freely determine the research agenda by co-designing research questions, objectives, and approaches.[32]

Similar to Indigenous research studies, public discourse on ancient MENA societies should also require the communities' consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands. While the current system of approvals operates through the various ministries of antiquities in the region, communities are rarely consulted, despite the fact that they are the first group to be affected by these activities.[33] In Western-European knowledge frameworks, the consent of research participants is a key feature of research ethics principles, yet the same requirement of consent is rarely imposed on any knowledge production that has a direct impact on MENA communities' representations and livelihoods. Informed consent should include ongoing consent to conduct research on communities' land. This requires researchers to accept that communities may not be interested in the proposed research. Additionally, priorities may shift over the course of a project; informed consent should be ongoing and revisited. If consent is withdrawn throughout the course of a project, researchers need to accept a community's right of refusal.

Respecting communities' self-determination and consent requires careful consideration of how and which data is collected, how it is interpreted, and how results are disseminated. It also requires an understanding of the historical lived experience of communities and their future expectations. Repositioning community priorities, while producing knowledge on their ancient societies, can build lasting and meaningful intercultural relationships, address community needs, and improve research.

Ensuring communities have the right to control the intellectual property produced on their land is key to building respectful relationships. This is highly relevant to archaeological archives that are hosted at institutions in the Global North, which hold crucial information on community histories, yet they are inaccessible to them. Archive institutions and researchers must respect communities' intellectual ownership of these archives and transparently share the material with them in languages and modes of communication that are accessible to them.

Best practices should also include the frequent sharing of research project updates and results with communities about their material culture or land. Researchers should ensure they publish results in open access journals and non-academic formats in local dialects. In addition, we must prioritise and respect a community's contribution to the knowledge production process, particularly through co-authorship and naming community members in funding applications.

Recognition of Rights and Positionality

Building trust is an essential component of any meaningful long-term relationship with communities within a settler-colonial setting.[34] Trust should not be confined to conducting fieldwork or engagement activities, but should be established as an inherent basis for researching other cultures. Trust should be built through the recognition of rights. In the case of MENA, this could include the recognition of contemporary communities' rights to accept or refuse proposed research. At present, relationships between MENA communities and Global North institutions and practitioners are, perhaps, best characterised by a sense of distrust.[35] This distrust can, in part, be attributed to the Western-European military interventions in the region. On the other hand, public discourse has largely contributed to the current invisibility of MENA communities within the knowledge production process of their histories, as research is usually conducted on the region and not with it. Reaching out and engaging early with communities of practice within the region should be viewed as a non-negotiable. MENA communities of practice can hold formal and informal influence and power within the culture. They can help build bridges with wider communities and provide insights into the cultural appropriateness of the methodologies and theoretical framings that are proposed. However, they should be compensated for their time and knowledge in ways that are appropriate and acceptable for them. Similarly, researchers need to recognise communities' rights to withhold their consent or refuse to share their knowledge.

The recognition of one's own privileges is key in positioning oneself when working on ancient MENA societies. With this unpacking, researchers can recognise how they will never be able to fully understand some of the challenges that contemporary MENA communities face due to how they are isolated from their ancient predecessors. Researchers have the responsibility to use their privilege to dismantle oppressive systems of knowledge production by recognising their responsibilities towards contemporary communities.

The reproduction of coloniality in the public discourse on ancient MENA societies is, perhaps, perpetuated by a lack of reflexivity among institutions and practitioners of their own positionality and epistemological situatedness. An honest, liberating dialogue that centres communities' needs and expectations is essential to deconstruct the current co-option of colonial frames of knowledge production and dissemination.[36] While that dialogue will differ across contexts and positionalities, it can be conceptualised broadly as an approach that emphasises the connection between concrete teaching strategies, resources, practices, and significant personal change. Recognition of positionality, in this case, should not be underpinned by merely a self-contained intellectual exercise, but needs continuous interrogation to counter epistemological and practical absences that reinforce "the separation of the scientist vis-á-vis his or her object of research, including his or her own past sociological knowledge."[37] It needs to be carried out in light of the context of the struggle that "provides noncognitive dimensions that condition the ways in which absent social groups and knowledge become present"[38]. Only then will we be more critically self-reflexive and develop a capacity for epistemological and ontological pluralism. Reflection, including self-critique, and action are imperative in any transformative anticolonial work.

A framework centring MENA communities' rights to approve or refuse knowledge produced and the way it is disseminated is key for anticolonial change. Within this framework, researchers need to adhere to relational accountability. Reciprocity and responsibility are key features of a healthy relationship and must be included in any research on ancient societies' modern communities that self-determine as a community of descent.[39] In a rights-based framework, researchers need to reflect on a set of questions:

- How do my methodologies help build healthy relationships between my research questions and communities?
- What is my socio-political role in this research and what are my responsibilities?
- How can my research support communities' rights to self-determination?
- Is my research inducing or preventing harm to communities?
- What am I giving back to communities? Is this learning process reciprocal?

By reflecting on these questions, the reciprocal relationship then becomes the guiding principle of the researcher. Researching other people's cultures is a privilege and a responsibility. We, as researchers, are responsible for the methodological

and theoretical framing of our research choices and the harm it can inflict on communities. We must give power to building positive connections with communities and not give strength to ideas that separate and detract the past from the present.

Rematriation and Ways of Being, Seeing, and Doing

The isolation of contemporary MENA communities' ways of seeing and knowing from the public discourse on their ancient societies contributes to their socio-political invisibility and marginalisation. This segregation also contributes to constructing socio-cultural stigmas and stereotypes affecting their day-to-day lives. In this respect, the public discourse does not only replicate colonial framing, but it also perpetuates social injustices.

Rematriation is a powerful term and concept, introduced by the Indigenous women of Turtle Island, to describe how they are restoring balance to the world.[40] Unlike repatriation, the rematriation of knowledge pushes against the heteropatriarchy. It works to reject narratives and theories that have been used against Indigenous communities by restoring Indigenous epistemological knowledge. It challenges the reductive notion of the return of objects, as material things, by asserting Indigenous ways of seeing, being, and doing in the knowledge production of ancient societies.

Rematriating how knowledge is produced or disseminated is a form of participatory research that requires researchers to work with and in community, rather than on community. Rematriation introduces ways of seeing, doing, and being that are anticolonial and that reject imperial knowledge framing. Thus, rematriation is based on the source communities' unique needs, priorities, and values. Adopting this method rebalances the power structure between researchers and communities by increasing the degree of accountability to communities. This concept resonates with Egyptian feminist Nawal Saadwi's framing of how coloniality could be challenged through anticolonial activism centred around female ways of being, seeing, and doing, disrupting the violence of Eurocentric methodologies.

Coloniality has violently structured how we see ourselves and the world around us. The concept of rematriation, as introduced here, is an act of restructuring how communities relate to the land, one another, and to themselves. Rematriation is founded upon relational accountability, where accountability is a two-way process. Through this framework, researchers and communities are accountable to one another and share the power. This can challenge power hierarchies and introduce alternative ways of partnership and collaboration. This is of particular relevance and importance to MENA communities as they struggle to fit within Eurocentric boxes of ethnicity and race. By applying rematriation to MENA communities, we acknowledge their Indigenous rights to their cultural heritage. Their indigeneity is based on the collection of thoughts, feelings, and internal and intrapersonal behaviours that intentionally allow them to reconnect, reinterpret, and relearn in ways that prioritise and restore a spiritual and emotional relationship to the

land and their ancestors. Once their indigeneity is rematriated, their rights to self-determination and consent to knowledge production and dissemination of their ancestors will be recognised and respected.

Conclusion: The Importance of Continuously Asking the Am I Complicit? Question

The manifest Othering which defines the knowledge production and dissemination on ancient MENA societies shows that imperialist policy can be expressed via non-intervention. Colonialism continues through the perpetuation of the status quo, which is favourable to neo-colonial interests, and not just via the interventionism that is normally associated with imperialism. Public discourse on MENA needs to expose and explore the discomfort of the past and present colonial practices of its knowledge production. We, as researchers are bound to the colonising project through the practices and policies which govern our disciplines and institutions. By acknowledging how our work negatively affects contemporary communities and enduring the resulting discomfort, we can develop self-awareness and humility, after which we are bound up to the liberation of ourselves, the modern, and the ancient MENA communities.[41] This process of collective liberation could be initiated by asking ourselves if we are complicit in the harm and suffering of contemporary communities. In posing this question, we can, perhaps, remain conscious, reflective, and appropriately uncomfortable of our positionality and attempt to heal, rather than harm.

Notes

1 By Middle East and North Africa (MENA), I refer to the 22 Arabic-speaking countries in the region. This is based on Egyptian use and wider understanding of the term within these countries today. However, I am conscious of the continuing colonialism and geographical inaccuracy and ambiguity of the term. MENA as a term and concept is loaded with imperial scarring and Oriental stereotypes. Over the past years and following the decolonising turn, there have been various Indigenous MENA scholarly attempts, mainly in the diaspora, to adopt a more neutral term that directly reflects the geographical parameters of the region. As a result, Southwest Asia and North Africa (SWANA) was introduced as a more geographically and culturally accurate alternative term. While SWANA has found some traction in academic circles, it remains unpopular and unfamiliar among communities. As the term Middle East and North Africa remains widely known and is used among Arabic-speaking communities for self-identification, I am adopting it with care – respecting communities' choice while acknowledging its colonial legacy. For a discussion of SWANA, see Bishara 2023.
2 El-Saadawi 1980.
3 Kwaymullina 2016.
4 Abd el-Gawad and Stevenson 2021, 121.
5 See, for example, Munawar 2024; Azzouz 2022; Kathem and Kareem Ali 2021.
6 Maldonado-Torres 2007, 243. On the use of this term, see also Rodgers, this volume.
7 Colla 2007, 103. See also the chapter by Malvoisin in this volume.
8 Anderson 2015.

9 Abd el Gawad and Stevenson 2021.
10 Abd el Gawad and Stevenson 2023.
11 Abd el Gawad 2024.
12 For example, see the affiliation and background of majority of speakers at British Ancient Near East Association, ASOR, and the International Congress of Egyptology conference programmes; Kamash 2021.
13 Bonnie et al. 2023.
14 Kamash 2021.
15 Moreton-Robinson 2004, 75.
16 See for example: Regulski 2018.
17 Cultural Protection Fund (n.d.).
18 Abd el-Gawad and Stevenson 2021.
19 Sarr and Savoy 2018. On the issue of separating African collections from Egyptian and Nubian collections, see Malvoisin, this volume.
20 Azzouz 2022.
21 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 31 (2007).
22 Ignace et al. 2023.
23 Atia et al. 2022.
24 Atia et al. 2022.
25 For a discussion of the problems of genetics and DNA as the basis of indigenous links to land, see, for example, TallBear 2021, 467–78.
26 Hemdan 1967, 34.
27 Heikal 1926, 10.
28 See for example Regulski 2018; Bonnie et al. 2023.
29 Brusius 2021, 197.
30 For example, the labels of the ancient Egyptian galleries at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology, University College London, UK; Museo Egizio Torino, Italy; and the Museum am Rothenbaum – Kulturen und Künste der Welt, Hamburg, Germany are all in classical Arabic.
31 Amin 1989.
32 See for example Atalya 2012, 220–24 for a discussion on obligation towards indigenous communities within North American Archaeological Practices.
33 Myskell 2000.
34 Lin et al. 2020.
35 Abd el-Gawad 2024.
36 Freire 1996.
37 Santos 2018, 28.
38 Santos 2018, 27.
39 Weber-Pillwax 2001.
40 Rematriation 2023
41 Wright and McCoy 2012.

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4

INDIGENISING AS ANTI-CLASSICAL? LOCATING INDIGENOUS CLASSICISMS IN AND BEYOND MUSEUM FRAMEWORKS

Kendall Lovely

Introduction: Doing Decolonial Work[1]

The field of Classics is rooted in the notion that the foundations of Western civilisations are entrenched in the civilisations of ancient Greece and Rome. Classicism, then, asserts a Eurocentric frame, but one that also has universalising dimensions. This inherent Eurocentrism informs fraught relationships between Classics (also broadly referred to as classical studies, ancient Mediterranean studies, ancient history, and variations of these terms) and colonialism.[2] Productive conversation can still come from examining the spaces of intersection between classics and colonialism. I do, however, caution against the use of terms such as "decolonising" and "Indigenising" in the classroom, especially when divorced from community-based practices. To assert an Indigenised version of Classics assumes that Indigenous peoples exist separately from the field itself, and that the rediscovery or reinsertion of racialised representations or knowledges can serve to "decolonise" it. Such a framework, however, leaves intact the broader structures of violence upon which institutions exist. Classical studies still lingers as an extractive outsider, and this violent past can hold no place for either healing or Indigenous futurity. In considering how the study of the ancient Mediterranean, through Classics and beyond, could contribute to a decolonial future, this discussion considers the possibilities of engagement with community members to repair past harm perpetuated by colonial violence, rather than reproducing structures of violence through non-reciprocal knowledge extraction. A decolonial approach is not merely about communities, but for – and, ideally, by – community members. Not all classrooms, however, are designed with Indigenous people's direct involvement, so what I advocate for here is not an indigenising effort, which can only be done by and for Indigenous people on their own terms.[3]

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Rather, this chapter considers how educators and their students in ancient Mediterranean studies should consider present-day Indigenous peoples neither as a monolithic oppositional force to the field of Classics, nor as some fresh enhancement to appropriate perspectives into one's teaching for "decolonisation" purposes. For example, one of the most basic definitions of indigeneity relates to the ancient concept of autochthony (nativeness through natural origination from a place),[4] and thus depends on an understanding of "indigenous" as "land-based." Thus, classicists concerned with environmentalism and critical ecologies may find Indigenous Studies enticing for understanding the ancient world.[5] Indigenous-centred environmental studies should be about understanding ongoing vitality, resilience, and responsibility, rather than mining Indigenous cultures for their knowledges.[6] Indigenous studies provides more than a novel ecological approach, it also encompasses political movements, such as landback, which requires the restoration of political autonomy in relation to occupied lands, waters, and skies. The perspectives of Indigenous studies, therefore, are crucial to the work of engaging communities as part of their liberation from colonial violence.[7] Work that ties history making to Indigenous sovereignty and liberation remains relevant for communities outside the classical studies classroom, which is why it is necessary for those using critical ecologies in the field of ancient Mediterranean studies to pay attention to this work, and to understand how Indigenous peoples' perspectives are relevant among varying communities that are excluded from the underlying frameworks which inform the hegemonic classicisms as *classical*. In this chapter, I will emphasise the political stakes of doing decolonial work as praxis beyond theory.

Decolonisation, Indigenisation, Public History, and Classics

A useful definition of decolonisation comes from GVGK Tang, a community organiser and practitioner of public history, who writes, "[d]ecolonization means creating work for and by our communities. Decolonization means dismantling institutions and redistributing wealth. Decolonization means reparations—without reconciliation—because colonial violence is irreconcilable."[8] Following this assertion, work specific to the needs of Indigenous communities should be central to the work of Indigenisation as a form of decolonisation. GVGK Tang also critiques public history as a field rooted in unequal power, where they highlight preservation as tied to gentrification, oral histories that often involve uncompensated extraction, and archivists' unacknowledged consumption of violence amid colonial origins.[9] Tang's assessment touches upon the overall power imbalance of outsider historians entering into communities to do public work – the question being, who is the intended public in public history work? Oftentimes, the Indigenous community is a source for resource extraction for the public historian's research *about* them, yet this community is often not the main audience (at least not directly) for the output derived from that research. The work of Indigenisation

must be done by and for Indigenous communities towards dismantling colonial institutions. In bringing the concerns of community-based efforts to the forefront of defining decolonial work, I aim to de-emphasise approaches to decoloniality that tend towards superficial gestures and make a mere spectacle of colonial violence, rather than serving as opportunities for Indigenous-led community engagement.

Rather than simply creating acknowledgements and citing de-contextualised theoretical frameworks from the field of Indigenous studies, I draw from the work of community-engaged museum anthropologists and public historians to highlight practical work that can be successfully done with students and public audiences. Although Classics is typically a more academic-oriented field, those interested in decolonial aims can follow into conversation with public historians and museum practitioners towards transformative interventions that work beyond colonial frameworks, developed for and by communities, that tend to be underrepresented in classrooms, museums, and public-facing narratives. I argue that it is essential to develop a "decolonised" approach to the ancient Mediterranean world when engaging with modern publics, and educators can benefit from the expertise of public historians and museum practitioners who are actively engaging in decolonial exercises.

Learning from Community-Centred Efforts

My contribution to this discussion is of interest to both classroom facilitators and their students, ideally students who may be emerging museum studies and heritage practitioners, which can include anthropologists and art historians, who are engaged with topics related to the public interpretation of Mediterranean antiquity. In achieving decolonial aims, a publicly engaged scholar must do the work of defining the communities that they serve, so that they can determine community needs. In the case of adopting aspects of Indigenous studies, this requires a more nuanced engagement with both national and local histories, as well as a reciprocal and non-extractive model for working with those communities.

My goal with this chapter is to emphasise the need to engage with reparative models. Repair is necessary where colonial dispossession and racialisation across modern colonial and imperial contexts has informed Classics as a discipline. Colonial violence, for instance, informs how we understand the ancient past as *classical*, especially as exclusionary Eurocentric frameworks were adopted to construct the notion of the "West" and define its aesthetics.[10] Museums have traditionally been rooted in Euro-Western constructs which promote colonial Othering through taxonomic gazing informed through museum anthropology.[11] While some institutions and museum practitioners are engaging and reckoning with these structures, bringing about decolonial aims remains an ongoing conversation and struggle. It is important to note that I do not consider this discussion in itself to be a decolonising effort, because decolonisation is built from long-term relationship building and work that exceeds and transcends a single project or publication. My

intention, however, is to share ways that we might meaningfully start considering this long-term work by introducing the impacts of and processes behind public narratives to scholars of ancient history and Classics (and their students) for them to more responsibly work with public-facing audiences beyond the classroom.

To begin such a process, we must begin with the recognition that, whether in a museum exhibit or a classroom context, the main audience is typically assumed to consist of individuals who are not Indigenous or racialised; that is, they are assumed *not* to be the communities that would most benefit from decolonial work. As Tang explains, "[w]hite middle-class public historians are columbusing activist history-making and grassroots preservation work—treating it as a new frontier to be discovered, explored, and exploited. The recent spate of pandemic and protest collection projects initiated by traditional practitioners erases a rich history of activist-led scholarship and documentation efforts."[12] I have concerns that some Classics and ancient Mediterranean history scholars are doing the same columbusing around Indigenous issues.

This chapter, therefore, provides a framework for educators alongside emerging scholars and professionals to make meaningful strides towards decolonisation by introducing several critical discussion topics. These topics draw from dialogues among public historians and museum professionals, but lay the groundwork for confronting the colonial frameworks that permeate the field of ancient Mediterranean studies in both classroom and museum education settings. I also offer reflections on how we might apply such work to the field of Classics and any public-facing scholarship that emerges from the discipline, especially as the field has historically lagged in its attempts to grapple with its extractive and colonial history. Public scholarship, including syllabi and teaching guides, published by ancient history practitioners, for instance, must confront their positionality within the academic space they inhabit and consider how they might engage in non-extractive approaches to collaboration and publication. Furthermore, any postsecondary course engaging with decolonisation should start by asking what "Indigeneity" means—and from there, what does it mean to "Indigenise?" Classicists teaching with decolonisation frameworks should understand how the term "Indigenous" exists in both racialised and political categories and to be aware that those political categories are not stable, even across North American contexts.[13] Such curricular intervention emphasises continuing work to repair relationships to ancient pasts as well as addressing present realities of community members with racialised and politicised lived experiences.

I organise this brief discussion around three areas where classical studies and ancient Mediterranean history scholars can focus on issues relevant to both their fields and those of Indigenous studies in a way that does not speak over – or on behalf of – diverse community interests: (1) race, sovereignty, and futurity (which considers colonial formations related to Blackness, including approaches to the Black Venus, futurity, and visual sovereignty); (2) repatriation and reclamation (which considers some issues of heritage as colonially constructed, but also

pays attention to some reparative efforts); and (3) resources for repairing injustice (which further ties issues of sovereignty and colonial structures of harm to considerations of doing right by communities). These topics inform the critical framework that I recommend for any postsecondary course that aims to introduce Classics or ancient Mediterranean topics as decolonial, or is otherwise invested in practically serving modern communities. In order to illustrate tangible ways to achieve these aims, I point to a few examples of Native American engagements with classical frameworks that reveal complex relationships between Indigenous peoples' perspectives and relevant interests to Classics, as a means to complicate narratives about Indigenous subjectivities in rethinking the structures of classicism. Overall, these complications exist where decolonial work should intersect with critical race, feminist, and queer directions for community-based liberation. Some practitioners of public history in the United States are having important discussions on what it means to do work as historians for the benefit of communities, which should also serve as points of consideration for public engagements with Classics and the ancient Mediterranean, more broadly. [14]

Race, Sovereignty, and Futurity

Developing a critical understanding of colonial structures necessitates introducing into one's postsecondary course the work of scholars who are reading into aspects of race. A focus on race asks students to consider some ways in which classical studies has engaged with the topic of race (not just Indigeneity) as it intersects with *empire* (not just coloniality; italics for emphasis) and the ancient world. In this section, I bring together scholarship from different disciplines to consider how race is a colonial construct that could be further addressed in intersecting ways, particularly by exploring Blackness as well as Black and Indigenous femininity. The importance of using this intersectional work is that it asserts Black and Indigenous sovereignty, or political self-determination which is expressed through bodily and visual assertions in these case studies, while simultaneously building towards futurity**,** or continued future existence. Sovereignty and futurity are two major concerns of decolonial work, so I present these concepts as non-exhaustive examples that can serve as bases for defining both sovereignty and futurity in a decoloniality-framed classics classroom.

To present these terms, I highlight productive conversations which concern visuality, a useful model to complement the literary study that is often the domain of classical studies, and I emphasise considerations of the artistry of Black and Indigenous women as a means of recognising important shifts in their assertions of visual self-determination across museum spaces. While the breadth of work on race and Classics is more expansive than what I can cover in this chapter, I will point to some ways in which this work can meaningfully overlap with areas of decolonial museum anthropology and public history. To begin, classical studies and museums alike rely on the notion of a canon that bolsters western civilisation

and its aesthetics.[15] Black and Indigenous artwork, therefore, often falls outside traditional notions of the western fine art canon, which centres whiteness. As such, Indigenous art may seem like a counter to the colonial impositions of aesthetics, but I argue that the work of Black and Indigenous artists – both those recognised within and outside of traditional museum canons – can be useful in challenging white supremacist claims to ancient pasts. For example, Heidi Morse's essay in her co-edited volume, *Classicisms in the Black Atlantic,* draws a line between nineteenth-century sculptor Edmonia Lewis and contemporary photographer Carrie Mae Weems in their reinterpretations of Rome as a classical centre, both of whom use their work to situate ancient Egyptian presence and Blackness into Rome's classical past. Morse's essay sees both Weems' photographic series *Roaming* (2006) and Lewis' *Death of Cleopatra (1876)* as interventions in deconstructing Classical associations with whiteness through the lens of the African diaspora.[16] This lens challenges the prevailing associations of classicism with whiteness as well as challenging the problematic figure of the Black Venus, a trope rooted in colonial metanarratives that sexualises Black women.[17] Inasmuch as the Black Venus trope has pervasive usage in art history out of colonial gazing, Weems provides a counter-approach in viewing Black women's presence in art outside of this gaze. Weems is an artist who works towards self-determination with the Black female nude, asserting a decolonial classicism with her reclamation of the Black Venus. Lewis' work, on the other hand, is significant for its reorientation of classical art history in relation to her positionality as both a Black and Native artist, who was not only educated in the Classics, but was raised by her maternal Ojibwe aunt and with her Native family's craft traditions.

In addition to Morse's scholarship, which is essential to the deconstruction of the racialised gaze through the creation of self-determined visual representations, I suggest studying examples of community-curated art exhibitions to consider ways to shift voice and authority in public spaces beyond ethnographic gazing. A complimentary example of such a curatorial shift towards self-determined organisation is the Minneapolis Institute of Art's exhibition *Hearts of Our People,* which was curated by a community board of mostly Native American women, and situates Edmonia Lewis alongside other Native women artists.[18] The exhibition catalogue provides a window into how the co-curators and advisory board approached organising the MIA's expansive exhibition, which transcends both the neat categories of western fine art versus craft or ethnographic object, as well as tradition versus modernity.

Both Weems and Lewis also engage with what many Indigenous filmmakers and photographers in the United States and Canada assert as forms of visual sovereignty. Tuscarora art historian and museum curator Jolene Rickard stresses that Native artists' visualisation work around expressing self-determination is crucial towards negotiating the complexities of sovereignty amid ongoing relationships to settler-colonial states.[19] Through interrelated colonial histories, Black artists, including Lewis and Weems, negotiate their expressions of self-determination

against violent colonial visualisations. Utilising a lens of visual sovereignty, one can synthesise an analysis, such as Heidi Morse's, with an understanding that the centring of Rome is only one feature of Lewis' work, which is firmly situated in the space of her shared Native and Black identity. Lewis's shared Native and Black identity, moreover, is a useful starting point to remind students and practitioners alike that these two positionalities are not mutually exclusive and are both influenced by violent colonial structures, including those informed by Classicism; yet, we can also understand how Black and Indigenous liberation are tied together by decolonial efforts.[20]

Ethnographic studies and artistic images also contribute to colonial imaginaries that draw influence from ancient Mediterranean pasts, which critical interventions by scholars across the subfields of art history, history, and Classics have critiqued using the Black Venus, a colonial trope which exploits Black women through rendering them as sexual objects out of their visualised bodies.[21] The work of reclaiming women relegated to the status of Black Venus from her violent colonial archival traces is also difficult and fraught, as discussed in Saidya Hartman's essay, "A Venus in Two Acts." Hartman is a writer and scholar of African American literature who finds allusions to classical antiquity haunting the archival records of Atlantic slavery. In her work, Hartman identifies a ubiquitous "Venus"—but her frequent appearance exists as fragmentary glimpses of girls rendered into "Venuses," but in chains, and is also pervaded by a profound silence and the violence of erasure.[22] For Hartman, the archive of Atlantic slavery is a rich place for seeking out the psychological and experiential, yet it is also a place of violence. Her focus on ephemeral traces of enslaved people instructs the reader how to write history from these absences, while also underscoring limits on narrative history writing. She cautions against creating a false romance of resistance, as well as looking at the past in mere hopelessness. As Hartman notes, "[t]he necessity of trying to represent what we cannot, rather than leading to pessimism or despair, must be embraced as the impossibility that conditions our knowledge of the past and animates our desire for a liberated future."[23] Work towards liberated decolonial futures can read the violence accompanying the past imposition of classical antiquity and not impose desires for brighter pasts with which to associate these references – but to recognise the gaps created by the past and turn that desire towards work concerned with the present and futures.

Futurity – that is, renewed and continued existence – is also a concern for classicists who realise that their field's stakes are not merely rooted in peoples distant and long dead. Futurity, for Indigenous peoples, is persistence and efforts for survival, but also contention against relegation to static pasts.[24] An example of how futurity figures into conversations about Classics is the public-facing work of Dan-El Padilla Peralta, whose article in *The New York Times* addresses his attempt to save Classics from whiteness. This article provides a useful starting point for discussions of race and Classics and offers educators opportunities to ask their students whether Classics can be "decolonized" or otherwise salvaged from its

colonial underpinnings. It's not an easy question to answer, but Padilla Peralta's perspective provides an optimistic take.[25]

The scholarship highlighted thus far offers meaningful ways in which students of classics and museums studies can engage with the ancient Mediterranean past with the goal of moving towards decolonial futures, particularly through confrontations with the colonial gaze and the entrenched power structures within the field. Most importantly, the discussion above includes perspectives from scholars, practitioners, and the artists themselves, which shed light on ways to bring about these goals that honour sovereignty and self-determination, rather than treating Indigenous knowledge as a universal site for extraction. Imagining decolonial futures for racialised peoples beyond the violence of colonial pasts may seem in opposition to viewing history through the distant past, but for those whose lives are still embedded in those histories, the work of intersectional, critical race, feminist, and Indigenous perspectives, can reveal ways to engage with histories, fields, and institutions beyond colonial white supremacy.

Repatriation and Reclamation

Building from these issues of race and restoring self-determined or sovereign futures, the museum field crucially deals with issues of repatriation and reclamation in addressing colonial harms, particularly redressing museums' role in colonial dispossession, and surveying these conversations would be useful in confronting colonial structures in a Classics classroom. A decolonial approach to museums as heritage repositories requires a critical examination of race, both past and present. I also argue, however, that incorporating decolonial theories in teaching the ancient past necessitates not being apolitical, since it is coloniality that defines peoples as Indigenous – which is, itself, also an inherently political identity. Questions of who owns the past and who owns Indigenous materials are inherently linked in narratives of imperial and colonial (dis)possession. Repatriation is a common term referring to the return of materials to a home country, often through a set of legal or ethical procedures. However, reclamation can refer to a broader set of restorations involving materials, knowledges, and forms of heritage to dispossessed communities Scholars, along with museum professionals, should lead their students in deconstructing the idea of a Greco-Roman heritage that belongs to anyone, as well as the role of the nation-state in claiming heritage (by which imperialism and colonialism can largely rule these claims premised in inheritance of the ancient past). A case study that brings into question the role of Classics as an inheritance of certain imperial nations is an examination of the controversy over the Parthenon marbles at the British Museum. The work of Yannis Hamilakis, in particular, delves into the difficult material relationships that diasporic community members seek to repair in approaching museum objects after those materials are displaced through imperial collecting regimes.[26] Ultimately, a discussion of the complications between colonialism and resulting

claims to ancient objects can lend itself to further critiques of appropriations of the past that violently exclude people in the present.[27]

The prestige that surrounds major institutions serving as repositories for the spoils of centuries of global colonialisms underscores complications with who can claim Classical heritage for themselves.[28] The work of Diego Romero represents a useful case study to illustrate this point, particularly from the perspective of a Native artist engaging with Classicism. Romero is a Native American potter from Cochiti Pueblo whose works draw inspiration from popular culture, ancient Greek figural drawing, and his tribe's own pottery traditions. As a way of considering the role of contemporary art intersecting with the ancient past and the politics of museum collecting, I consider a 2019 interview where Diego Romero talks about his use of Classical art. In the interview, Romero explicitly expresses his excitement about his work's relative proximity to works such as the Rosetta Stone at the British Museum.[29] While Romero takes pride in his artwork's inclusion within the British Museum's encyclopaedic collections, it is important for those engaging with the video to also recognise that the Rosetta Stone is not a neutral feature of the British Museum's holdings, and that the perception of an assumed universality of heritage obfuscates the colonial histories and complications of artefact collecting.[30] Discussions of ancient Egypt's material culture and heritage within modern histories of colonial dispossession belong to a growing body of scholarship, which I only briefly highlight here, but will discuss further in the next section. The case of Romero, a Native American contemporary artist seeking inclusion in global art history, on the one hand highlights the diverse claims to ancient Mediterranean material as inspiration, regardless of classicism's constructed associations with coloniality and whiteness. At the same time, Romero's indigenised adoption of Classical art does not engage with diasporic claims to Classical antiquity that seek repatriation from imperial collecting. Nonetheless, Romero's art decentres some assumptions about Classical art as representing a white civilisation, even if the artist and his work still rely on some of the underlying colonial structures that serve in dispossession. Overall, Romero's work is both exemplary of the diversification of Classicisms and fine art canons, but also emphasises the difficult position of material culture and objects that are under the contested stewardship of entities, such as those within the British Museum.[31]

The broader issues of repatriation and display are also crucial to this comparative discussion. There is no easy way to resolve these issues cross-culturally and internationally, and one could teach a whole course on repatriation without fully broaching all aspects of it. Still, I point to select resources that can serve as starting points. In her recent book, historian and museum scholar Angela Stienne makes a compelling case for re-evaluating the prevalence of Egyptian mummies in museums and recognising them as human bodies, and not mere curiosities; her perspective as a non-Indigenous scholar advocating for this recognition and re-humanisation, however, is not new.[32] Issues related to the display of ancient human remains also intersect with the ongoing pleas for the return of Indigenous

ancestors globally, and should be of serious concern to scholars of ancient history and Classics engaged with "decolonising" classical antiquity. If one takes for granted the notion that ancient bodies belong to a "global cultural commons,"[33] this renders them into objects and normalises treating them as such, perpetuating their deaths as spectacles for display rather than as the end of human life. There are many differing views regarding the display of human remains, including in modern Egypt, which is better covered by Heba Abd el-Gawad in this volume;[34] and I recommend deferring to respecting source community connections to their ancestors. A recent article by museum anthropologists Alice Stevenson and Alice Williams points to other ways in which local diverse communities – and they stress these as local autochthonous rather than Indigenous peoples in the more narrow and political sense – can be more involved in the ethnographic displays representing Egypt, as they overwhelmingly remain in the shadow of a colonial imagination fascinated with ancient material culture.[35] Stevenson and Williams do not posit repatriation as a straightforward answer for modern Egyptians, but do provide a nuanced examination of reparative possibilities that represent local communities beyond the nation state.

Colonial dispossession, ancient and modern, is core to the topic of bridging antiquity and modern Indigenous issues. Roberta Mazza's *Everyday Orientalism* talk, "Powerful Text Things: Papyrology and the Material Turn," for instance, provides a useful framework for this discussion. Here, Mazza examines the case of the new Sappho fragments, which revealed a web of sketchy provenances and ethical questions about the acquisition of looted papyri through which ancient bodies are desecrated and origins might be fabricated to bolster certain textual "discoveries." She first provides a historiographic overview of papyrological discoveries (and the implication of colonialism within their study), which is relevant for anyone who works with ancient texts and serves as a reminder of the material forms of their original productions.[36] Mazza's central argument is that the Sappho papyrus case is not isolated, but is symptomatic of the field in terms of how ancient manuscripts are conceptualised. She further notes the problem of publishing papyri with unknown provenance without recognising this historicism, and that scholars should have a responsibility to correct these narratives.[37] Mazza centres papyri as not just a source of textual knowledge, but as objects with histories that scholars of classics and ancient history must consider. Ultimately, this talk can be used as an educational resource to show how the collecting of ancient materials has roots in a period of colonial extraction, which also informed Indigenous dispossession globally.[38]

Archaeological collecting and ethnography are intertwined, which has implications for challenging colonial claims to materials. Taking a critical approach to Western science narratives, Taylor M. Moore writes decolonial materialist histories of science that draw from objects previously rendered as mere specimens by museums. Her approach to the Egyptian amulets held at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, for example, asserts that those materials are archives that contain stories,

networks, economies, and social actors – all of which Eurocentric histories of science have made invisible. A useful complement to Moore's decolonial materialism can be found in recent work by Egyptologist Solange Ashby, whose research considers coloniality and its role in the historiography of the ancient past and focuses on the role of women in Egyptian and Nubian religious practices.[39] Both Ashby and Moore can help students consider how colonial power dynamics, including its racial formations, inform archaeological and ethnographic collecting, while also reapproaching histories as part of continuous Indigenous practices embedded in materials as bodies of knowledge.

Resources for Repairing Injustice

On the topic of reparative possibilities in reinterpreting pasts for public narratives, those working towards decolonial aims in ancient Mediterranean history or Classics should also learn how to approach audiences in public spaces with respect to the communities they serve. This section elaborates on the issue of sensitivity in relation to the needs of community members, especially when engaging with the public, and offers concrete pathways for future public scholars to evade harm and the perpetuation of violence and its structures in their work. There is no one way to repair injustice, but we can highlight issues around sovereignty and community collaboration. The goal is to consider pathways for facilitating reclamation and repair in the face of colonial dispossession and injustice.

In this vein, public scholars might be interested in a recent article by Lyra D. Monteiro which stresses the stakes of sensitive data sharing (an inherently political act) around human remains and cautions others not to continue open sharing as it continues the dehumanising process of collecting and racially extracting from those bodies.[40] The importance of sensitivity in relation to communities is perhaps best exemplified by a recent public-facing initiative by art historian Erin L. Thompson, whose work has traditionally focused on histories of the collection of classical antiquity and the dismantling of monuments.[41] However, in her recent foray into issues of returning stolen ancestors from the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), Thompson released sensitive information relating to the museum's extensive human remains collections.[42] In her attempts to elicit shock from readers, she used whistleblower tactics to reveal the unethical practices pertaining to the ancestral collections of the AMNH. Unfortunately, her article undermined her effort to correct this issue, since it put the dead back on display through a digital exposé of the gruesome details of these victims' deaths and their ongoing captivity as museum specimens. Thompson's project treated this open display as community outreach, but she made no effort to define the communities in need, nor did she take into consideration steps that would support data sovereignty and community needs.[43] Her approach, therefore, was not mindful of any potential harm to descendant communities.

Community collaboration can only occur with direct efforts to build relationships, including developing trust and working towards shared, rather than

extractive or one-sided, authority.[44] Crowdsourcing may seem like a form of community collaboration, but colonial power imbalances remain when such work omits care and sensitivity to specific community needs and desires – particularly when these efforts perpetuate violence through the revelation of painful realities as spectacle. The issue of spectacle, which pervades public-facing efforts, is why I instead advocate for collaborative and community-centred work grounded in care, while cautioning against the appropriation of Indigenising or decolonial aims. Care is embodied in meaningful empathetic connection, rather than well-meaning self-interest ,or "strategic narcissism" as described in a recent essay by Abd el-Gawad, who shares in much of my critique of Global North – or so-called "Western" – scholars' decolonial practices.[45] Decolonial work should treat communities not merely as audiences of their own histories, but as people who can lead their own efforts in recovering their voices and countering historic structures of violence, dispossession, and exclusion.

As discussed in the previous sections, reclamation (of space, power, and political autonomy) is decolonial work, since it actively seeks to repair colonial violence. Repairing injustice can take many forms and can contribute to decolonial liberation. Radical work around museum spaces (which themselves exist as colonial entities) can reveal ways in which a Classics classroom can further envision justice-oriented work towards sovereign Indigenous or decolonial futures. Monteiro's work in particular, mentioned above, reveals ways in which a critical study of Classics can extend into meaningful decolonial work. In her essay, "Power Structures: White Columns, White Marble, White Supremacy," Monteiro confronts the notion of heritage, an inherently possessive Western concept, and the history of white nationalism embedded in the classical-style architecture and monuments of the United States.[46] Although trained in classical archaeology, her critique is rooted in the power structures of American racial history and the public stakes of that history's ongoing violence. Monteiro's current project, *Finding Ceremony*, advocates for the return of stolen bodies from the collections of the Penn Museum to Black community members in Philadelphia.[47] The project, however, does not highlight Monteiro as a primary or sole organiser, but emphasises its collective nature, which is grounded in community healing and repair. Although her community-based work is not rooted in Monteiro's background in classics, this project is exemplary for learning about the work of decolonial liberation, which cannot be reduced to authoring a few public-facing essays, syllabi, or exhibits, but means sustaining long-term commitments to serving a community.

Conclusions

Working in collaboration with Indigenous people is not new territory, so I would invite any educator who wants to use terms such as "decolonise," or borrow from Indigenous studies within their curricula, to put practical applications, such as those seen in public history or museum practices, at the forefront of their teaching. This

is not a call to invent limited projects for the sake of using communities as teaching tools, but to pay attention to what decolonial projects look like and to centre both those who are doing the work and the communities that should primarily benefit from these efforts. Such action should take care not to reinforce or continue to naturalise oppositional binaries of Western versus Indigenous subjectivities and should avoid becoming too entangled with unpacking related terminology. As a reminder, this chapter frames decolonisation within GVGK Tang's work, which cautions against scholars' extractive appropriations that maintain power imbalances. Thus, the creation and maintenance of meaningful engagements with communities is of the utmost importance in locating Indigenous, or perhaps decolonial, relevance to the ancient past. To not reassert binary oppositions that understand Indigenous subjectivity as a monolithic anti-classical force, I cite throughout this chapter examples of a few artists and practitioners who have common experiences of navigating contemporary art and museum worlds, which can then serve as useful case studies for classrooms or museum programs. I use these examples to demonstrate how Indigenous presence in these spaces cannot always be understood as a complete subversion to defining a decolonial classicism. However, their multifaceted engagements with self-determination can assist in locating anti-colonial frameworks for dealing with the ancient past. Even if Indigenous adoptions of ancient Mediterranean worlds, as imagined through classical pasts in and of themselves, are not straightforwardly anti-classical, considering the contexts of their responses can reveal anti-colonial frameworks which include confronting classicisms, or receptions of ancient pasts, that are colonially structured with the violences of sexism, racism, environmental degradation, and Indigenous dispossessions.

Notes

1 I would like to express gratitude for the Thomas N. Sizgorich Memorial Fund for supporting the Open Access publication of this chapter, and I acknowledge Drs. Elizabeth DePalma Digeser and John W.I. Lee at UC Santa Barbara for their guidance.

2 I interchangeably use Classics and classical studies with ancient Mediterranean studies (with topics such as history, archaeology, art, etc.) as related fields and also in recognition of those with Classical training who are branching out or rejecting the basic premise of "Classics." This essay largely relies on classicism as point of decolonial departure, but I recognise these varying labels as relevant among this essay's audience.

3 I would not assert that this is a guide to "Indigenising" Classics, though this chapter is informed by my positionality as a mixed white Diné (Navajo) scholar, with training in classical Latin language and literature, and rooted in my career path as an emerging museum curator and public historian who teaches Native American history; I am not a classicist, but I have interests in the field of Classics.

4 From the Greek "αὐτόχθων" (autochthon), meaning literally "sprung from the land itself."

5 See Bosak-Schroeder 2020 for one example of critical ecologies read across Ancient Mediterranean and current global crisis contexts. Despite the need for engaging with Indigenous studies in the face of the climate crisis, which is exacerbated by ongoing colonialism, environmental movements have a complicated relationship with Native American sovereignty and liberation movements (see Gilio-Whitaker 2019).

6 Indigenous Environmental Studies is a field that emphasises intellectual traditions, educational practices, and political advocacy – it is embedded in cultural and political enactments (see Whyte 2018).
7 Fisk et al. 2021
8 Tang 2020.
9 Tang 2020.
10 See generally, Connelly 1995, Duncan 1995, and Kim 2024, for a discussion of how race has informed ideas about "civilization" and taste or aesthetic value through premising Indigenous material, collected through violent dispossession, as oppositional or lesser within the constructed hierarchies of art and museum spaces.
11 See Malvoisin, this volume. Kirshenblatt-Gimblet 1991 provides a useful discussion about the nature of ethnographic objects.
12 Tang 2020.
13 A few definitions that assert this complexity, as well as the necessity of political status, include Justice 2018, Whyte 2018, Moreton-Robinson 2015, and Coulthard 2014.
14 See, for instance, Cantwell et al. 2019; Barber 2013; and Tang 2020.
15 For further consideration of the issue of Eurocentric artistic canon, see Malvoisin, this volume.
16 Morse 2020. This volume also contains several other important considerations about Blackness and the Classics including by Black scholars, but I start with Morse's chapter due to its concern with particular canons of art history and Black feminisms. Art historian Lisa Farrington (2003) approaches the work of Carrie Mae Weems as an intervention against sexist and racialised gazing, bringing another disciplinary perspective to the importance of Weems' intervention in Western art canon; however, Morse brings this discussion of Weems into the view of classicism more directly.
17 Sigal et al. (2019) provides several useful essays that reconsider eroticised ethnographic observations across colonial contexts, but Miller-Young (2019) is especially relevant to the issue of the sexualisation of Black women's bodies and colonial visualisations.
18 For more on this exhibition, see accompanying catalogue by Ahlberg Yohe et al. 2019. See Gallart Marqués, this volume, for community-created art in a South American context.
19 Rickard 2011.
20 King 2019.
21 See supra n. 17.
22 Hartman 2008.
23 Hartman 2008, 13.
24 I refer to futurity in this broader conceptual definition, which has overlaps, but is not exclusive to, Indigenous and Afrofuturism artistic and sociopolitical movements concerned with imagining science and technology infused postcolonial futures for diasporic communities. With futurity, I emphasise the overall intentions of reviving and fostering possibilities for future existence.
25 Poser 2021.
26 Hamilakis 1999 and 2007; Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022. Gallart Marqués, this volume, presents a complementary case study to the issue of heritage and its relevance to Indigenous artists, particularly in relation to their production within colonial and Eurocentric frameworks. Her chapter offers a critical, but also optimistic, museum approach to re-contextualising Greco-Roman materials towards exposing colonial links with a Latin American, specifically Chilean, context.
27 See Hamilakis 2018, where he discusses the necessity of decolonial archaeology for social justice purposes.
28 Kim (2024) makes a clear connection between art canon prestige and aesthetic tastes, as defined through colonial collecting, in her introduction. On the definition of Classicism through museum-mediated ideals of "civilization," see Duncan 1995. Connelly (1995)

also provides an art historical explanation of how Classicism was formed out of colonial binaries which set it against perceived "primitive" Indigenous aestheticisation.
29 Sauvion 2019.
30 Jeffries 2022.
31 See Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2007 for a discussion on the open access nature of global heritage and its implications for denying and displacing heritage from local source communities. While this article primarily deals with intangible heritage, I posit that the term "ancient" serves as intangible heritage language that aims to universalise tangible or material forms. "Antiquity," then, becomes a discursive mode for globalising materials for all humanity, but makes invisible colonial power structures which govern access.
32 Stienne 2022. See also Abd el-Gawad, this volume and Rodgers, this volume.
33 Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2007, cf. n. 21, above.
34 Abd el-Gawad, this volume. See also Abd el-Gawad and Stevenson 2023 for an Egyptian perspective on the display of human remains; the edited volume that contains their essay highlights a wide variety of related issues.
35 Stevenson and Williams 2022.
36 Mazza 2020.
37 For another consideration of provenance narratives, see Rodgers, this volume.
38 See Platt 2023 to consider the case of the Phoebe A. Hearst collections and how the mass extraction of ancient Egyptian and Native American materials were significantly linked.
39 Ashby 2018 and 2019.
40 Monteiro 2023. Tsosie et al. 2020 also shows how this is not a new concern among Indigenous scholars towards the field of biological anthropology, arguing instead for sensitivity towards descendant communities possibly having privileged access over open data sharing and moving towards Indigenous data sovereignty, to avoid further exploitation by researchers who always have unequal access. Ironically, Thompson 2023 herself shares this citation as her single source on Indigenous perspectives on data sharing, but must have misunderstood the authors' overall aims and conclusions which argues for Indigenous-led determination.
41 Thompson 2016, 2022.
42 Thompson 2023.
43 Tsosie et al. 2020.
44 See Indian Arts and Research Center 2019 as a museum-oriented guide on feasible collaboration expectations. See Cantwell et al. 2019; and Barber 2013, for discussion of what "shared authority" means for public history work. A non-exhaustive list of collaborative museum case studies to reference includes Ames 1990; McMullen 2008; Archambault 2011; and Colwell 2015.
45 Abd el-Gawad 2023.
46 Monteiro 2020.
47 See Monteiro and Muhammad 2023.

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5

DENSITIES OF PROVENANCING

Narrating the Colonial Provenance of the Bay View Collection at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology

Ashton Rodgers

Introduction[1]

Provenance research is a museum practice that documents an object's history of ownership. These ownership histories or "provenance narratives" are, however, often guided by western notions of property.[2] This property focalisation is embedded not only in the concept of provenance research, but also in its grammar and narratives, from the way provenance is conceptualised as a history of ownership to the way written narratives reflect hierarchies of propertied relationships. Most often, provenance narratives are documented by institutions through catalogue records and finding aids. These databases and archives, however, not only tend to reproduce the conceptual centre of "property," but often limit stories to narratives of transfers of property, reflecting only narrow dimensions of the lives and histories of so-called "objects" in Mediterranean collections. As a result, provenance narratives tend to privilege research scopes and knowledge organised by property regimes.[3] For example, even in cases where colonialism is centred in the discussion of Mediterranean collections and provenance, the issues that come to the forefront (partage, unethical or illegal collection and ownership, antiquities markets, etc.) revolve around the concept of property.[4] While these issues are certainly important and necessary to address, they nevertheless seem to privilege ways of knowing and seeing "objects" through "possessive logics," which is evidenced by how museum records and finding aids (e.g., search functions of museum websites and collections databases) continue to reproduce "objects," including human remains, as property.[5] This chapter seeks to narrate provenance in a way that divests from the concept of property and from the longstanding notion that possessive logics represent an absolute authority on the contents of provenance narratives.

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In this chapter, I explore, through the lens of provenance, the relationships between a mummified Egyptian child currently on display at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology (object no. 1971.02.0179), two of the child's collectors (a female missionary named Harriet Conner and a religious community called the Bay View Association, henceforth BVA), and the colonial landscapes in which the child is situated: Egypt (historically) and Michigan (physically). Specifically, I will use the provenance narrative as an opportunity for critical discussion of collectors and collecting landscapes, and to decentre property using the framework of decolonial provenancing, as outlined in the following section. While at first it might seem that focusing on collectors does not meaningfully shift provenance away from the conceptual centre of "property," my narrative is not guided by possessive logics; rather, I reject collections as property and collectors as owners, and I centre the provenance narrative around the radiating political colonial contexts in which collecting is implicated.

Methodology

Margaret Kovach, an Indigenous scholar (Sakewew p'sim iskwew) of Nêhiyaw and Saulteaux ancestry, notes that methodology refers to the "belief system and methods that guide the research" – that is, "'the thinking' and 'the doing' of research."[6] As such, this methodology section begins with an explanation of how I am "thinking" about provenance, first contextually and then conceptually, and concludes with a brief outline of how I am "doing" provenance.

While calls for decolonising, or even "indigenising," the study of the ancient Mediterranean, including its museum practices, have become common, practical pathways towards these processes are less obvious, especially in provenance research.[7] In recent years, however, we have seen two important developments in provenance research that provide substantial inroads: namely, the rise of projects focused on human remains in academic collections and increased critical engagement with colonialism and histories of collecting.[8] From these trends, new approaches to provenancing have emerged. One example, which has been collectively termed "postcolonial provenance research," calls for the close and intensive examination of collections from colonised locations and their role in global debates around "indigenous cultural heritage, cultural property, repatriation and shared heritage."[9] Yet, these approaches, which include a variety of strategies from object-biography approaches to collaborative research practices, still adhere – in some ways – to the fundamental concept of property.[10] As Jyotindra Jain notes, colonial-era provenance is not simply about the displacement of objects and their "material transactions," but rather it "pivots on an understanding of the process of colonisation" and must focus on this process to move past its material and legal dimensions.[11] In this way, the conceptual focus on "property" in a provenance narrative can obscure other interconnected ways in which collectors are situated in the broader context of colonisation. Therefore, the methodology I use

in this chapter builds on the ways in which postcolonial provenance research calls for the examination of colonial collecting contexts and attempts to understand provenance within wider processes of colonisation. In doing so, I concentrate on collectors' complicity in colonialism and its associated morphologies, including colonial schools and dispossession. By focusing on stories of colonial schools and dispossession in the provenance narrative, we can both clarify the wider colonial landscape in which collecting is implicated and move beyond "property" as a fixed narrative referent for provenance. This emphasis requires a shift away from the provenance of cultural belongings and ancestral remains as defined by legal ownership, and towards provenance that is also defined by relationships to other systems of colonisation.[12]

To justify this shift and not relegate it to historical or background research, however, I am layering the idea of provenance with the metaphor of density, as described by Critical Indigenous theorists.[13] Provenance research is already organised by a multitude of logics, from the questions that guide projects to the goals that inform their trajectory. For example, the questions, "Who owned a collection?"; or "Are there ethical or legal issues surrounding it?" are each motivated by diverse rationales and disparate research agendas, from compiling accession history to repatriation. Density as an analytical tool, therefore, makes visible the idea that provenance is constituted by a multiplicity of perspectives. While I'm drawing on Critical Indigenous theorists' ways of engaging the metaphor of density, I do not mean Indigenous density as Métis scholar Chris Anderson applies it to Indigenous identities.[14] Rather, I mean the metaphorical analytic of density, where theorising within density implicates, as Dena'ina scholar Jessica Bissett Perea notes, a depth of peoples, logics, and projects through which we are also able to see entangled "colonial histories and political realities".[15] To densify an approach from within the context of Critical Indigenous Theory, in part, means to reject disciplinary traditions and conventions that frame research from a "difference" perspective.[16] A difference paradigm risks not only oversimplifying both the complexity of relationships that are possible within provenance research and knowledge produced by provenancing, but also fails to grasp the depth of possibilities for future provenancing projects. While a difference paradigm silos and categorises various projects, people, and logics within a hierarchy – thereby (re) producing the illusion that certain kinds of provenance research are parochial and peripheral to provenancing "proper" (as understood through its fixed referent, i.e., property) – density helps to understand those people, projects, and logics as part of applying depth to provenancing. In applying depth to provenance, the hierarchy within the concept of provenance (at the top of which I identify "property") can be destabilised by a discussion of collectors' wider participation in colonial structures; this initiates the inclusion of people previously obscured in provenance narratives through non-possessive logics in a political project. In this way, density considers the wider political conditions of power that surround the displacing of "objects," not as a fracturing of the project of provenancing, but as a layering

within other systems of colonisation that were produced by the same global power dynamics, occupation, and racism involved in displacing so-called objects.

While this is how I am "thinking" about and approaching provenance contextually and conceptually, my methodology also requires that I clarify my position, audience, and intent. Hence, the "I" in this chapter refers to the author – a graduate student with a background in archaeology, of mixed Mvskoke and European ancestry, trained in North America and currently living in Michigan. This chapter is written for those interested in pathways towards decolonising museum practices as well as intersections between the ancient Mediterranean past and modern colonisation. Moreover, it is written with the goal of exposing how ancient Mediterranean collections are embedded not only in the politics of cultural property but also in the political landscapes of colonial schools and dispossession.

I conclude this section by briefly explaining my process, or the "doing" of research. In provenancing this mummified child, I began by interrogating my relationship to the idea of provenance and critically examining what kinds of questions I was asking: was I centring the concept of property? What research directions and methodology de-centre property? When I ultimately turned to the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology archive, I found that this mummified child was situated within multiple colonial contexts that had been obscured by previous research. For example, when I began to research the child's provenance, I encountered a 2015 book published by the museum itself titled *Passionate Curiosities: Tales of Collectors & Collections from the Kelsey Museum* that discusses this mummified child's provenance, but without reference to the ways the child's collectors were involved in colonisation.[17] As a result of this occlusion, I approached provenancing as an opportunity to engage with a density of colonial stories and histories of collectors. The final part of this process, a written narrative for this mummified child, is purposefully not a formal museum entry, but a story that centres a critical discussion of the collectors' complicity in and contribution to colonial structures. How this mummified child came to the Kelsey Museum and who "collected" this child is a political story – not just because it is about colonialism, but because it implicates ongoing political struggles against colonisation that I will highlight in the conclusion. For this reason, I argue that provenance should be told politically by museum professionals and be mindful of the legacy of colonial schools and of ongoing Land Back struggles. With this in mind, I have focused this narrative on two entangled contexts that centre around two collectors and the mummified child. In what follows, I first provide an overview of how the mummified child came to be on display at the Kelsey Museum, then I focus on one of the child's collectors, Harriet Conner, and I conclude with a discussion of the removal of antiquities from Egypt and the relationship between this practice and missionary activity in the region. Finally, I discuss the BVA as a collector and the collecting landscape that was enabled by both colonial dispossession policies and individual missionaries in Michigan.

Before concluding the methodology section of this chapter, it is important to address the issue of displaying Egyptian human remains, including this

mummified Egyptian child. The ethical concerns surrounding the display of collections acquired by missionaries is an issue with which many museum professionals are grappling today; the display of certain bodies – including Egyptian mummified human remains – by western museums has invariably been an issue marked by both asymmetrical power dynamics and racialised dynamics, due to the role of white missionaries and collectors in the mass displacement of Egyptian mummified people in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To address the colonial histories of their collection and display, we must centre Egyptian voices, as the descendant community of these individuals, in the discussion.[18] Colonial ways of knowing, however, perpetuate the discourse that modern Egyptians are not the descendant communities of ancient Egyptian peoples. This notion obscures "the centuries in which diverse groups have inhabited the landscape of northeastern Africa, imbuing and drawing meaning from it."[19] In order to deconstruct the colonial framework that extracts ancient Egyptians from the modern inhabitants of Egypt, museums must actively centre contemporary Egyptian voices in the question of display. In prioritising the voices of descendant communities, we move away from questions regarding whether or not to display human remains, to questions that ask "what impact did/do these displays have on ancient and contemporary Egyptians? To what extent might they be considered dehumanising, both for those who produced these sacred remains and those who identify with them? What does the continued disregard of contemporary Egyptian voices within these debates say about current practices?"[20] It is imperative then, that these same questions be applied to the mummified child on display at the Kelsey, especially given that this child is positioned both as a scientific object – a 3D reconstruction of the child's skull is currently displayed on a wall label – and as museum object, contained within a reconstructed tomb behind glass panelling.

Provenancing

I cannot speak to this Egyptian mummified child's community of origin beyond the fact that this child lived in Egypt during the first-century CE. By extension, how exactly this child was "acquired" in Egypt, I also do not know; this limitation is due to a lack of documentary evidence since, by the late 1890s, the displacement of mummified people by trafficking was common in Egypt, especially in Protestant missionary circles proselytising in the region.

Before coming to the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology and the BVA before that, this mummified child's body was acquired in Egypt by one such missionary named Harriet Conner.[21] A Presbyterian missionary, Conner began working in Egypt and collecting ancient Egyptian antiquities during the second half of the nineteenth century. Her role in the contemporary antiquities trafficking network is attested in letters written by Charles Edwin Wilbour in January 1891, in which she appears several times regarding travel to archaeological sites in the Fayum region of Egypt and in connection to this region's antiquities trade.[22] Around the turn of

the nineteenth century, Conner's collection, including the mummified child, came into the holdings of the BVA, a Christian organisation in Michigan that obtained her collection with the intent to include it in a museum they were planning to build. Such a museum, however, was never built. As a result, this Egyptian collection, including the mummified Egyptian child, was transferred to the Kelsey Museum between 1963 and 1966 and was officially acquired in 1971; after this acquisition, the Kelsey Museum came to be known as the "Mummy Museum."[23] In the Kelsey, the provenance of this mummified child is currently listed as "Egypt" and its verbatim site as "Fayum," but this is presumably based on the Wilbour letters which reference Conner's role in the Fayum region's archaeology and antiquities trade.

This brief outline represents the more traditional practice of provenancing, yet the process of provenancing that I outlined above requires a closer examination of some of these collectors – not to further describe their position in antiquities networks or property systems, but to describe their position in other forms of colonisation (i.e., colonial schools and dispossession).

Egyptian Context

The collector Harriet Conner was assigned to work in Egypt by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions and sent to the Cairo Station in 1880 to work in the district's girls mission schools, which were run by the United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA).[24] Conner sailed from Philadelphia on the first of September 1880, stopped in Liverpool on the way, and then remained in Egypt until 1892, leaving only briefly during the British invasion of Egypt in 1882 and for a furlough in 1891.[25] The UPCNA primarily operated schools in three districts of Cairo, and records show Conner worked in two of these districts: Bulaq and Azbakeya.[26] The exact dates of her appointments at different schools in these districts are unknown, but records indicate that Conner worked at the Azbakeya girls day-boarding school, the Kulaly School for Girls, and as a Superintendent at the Bulaq School for Girls.[27]

Contextualising Conner's work at these mission schools in global history is important for understanding the colonial context of her collecting. The Presbyterian mission school efforts in Cairo, where Conner worked, began in 1854 when both the railway and steamship industry embroiled Egypt in the broader project of globalisation.[28] However, economic globalisation was not the only factor in the establishment of mission schools in Cairo. Mission schools appeared in Cairo as part of a globalised effort by colonial powers, including Britain and the United States, to obtain territory, Christianise the world, and manage the Egyptian communities they colonised. Thus, these schools were established to deal with a global and interconnected "problem" of managing local and indigenous peoples in colonised territories. For example, residential schools in North America were both chronologically and teleologically tied to girls' schools in Egypt.[29] The development of mission schools outside of North America by North Americans, including

in Egypt, seems to have coincided with "frontier expansion" in the United States.[30] One reason for this development was that over time, American missionaries' goal of christianising the world converged with the rise of "Egyptomania," which was fed by both Orientalism and Romanticism.[31] As a result, Christian missions expanded – from converting Indigenous and formerly enslaved peoples in North America – to converting formerly enslaved and Egyptian people in Egypt to Christianity.[32]

In the context of Egypt, these schools have been historically praised by westerners for providing opportunities and meeting social needs, especially on the topic of providing education for girls. However, a critical reading of the social context and primary sources shows that these schools were far from proto-liberatory or philanthropic institutions. Education, especially children's education, under the missionary rhetoric of the UPCNA, functioned as a lynchpin for both occupation and epistemicide. At the time, a white, euro-western, Christian education was seen as the means of remedying a perceived lack of "proper" education in Egyptian communities, especially among women and girls. However, as Edward Said noted, "imperialism masqueraded as an "educational movement" aimed at not only modernising but also "civilizing" these communities.[33] Records discussing these communities, including archival documents and the oral stories preserved in them, when read critically, show that these schools were part of the legacies of the Presbyterian church's perpetuation of racist and colonial ideas in Egypt. For example, Andrew Watson, a missionary in Egypt working at the same time as Conner, preserved some of these dynamics in his reflection on the experience of Egyptian families, the boarding school in Cairo, and some of its boarders:

> Their [teachers] patience, wisdom and perseverance were tried to the utmost by the parents of the boarders, who for a time would insist on coming to the school almost every day, and often wished to stay overnight. They would pry into everything to see what their children ate, what they drank, and how they slept. They had never been accustomed to have them absent from them for a night, and were governed only by a sort of animal affection for them, being unhappy unless they could either see them or hear them. Their frequent visits and untidy habits retarded the good work of training their children. After a few months these difficulties were removed.[34]

Watson's racism is clear, easily located in both his and the teachers' paternalism and the analogy that local parents behaved as animals. Yet, we can also read into the experience of these schools from the perspective of Egyptian parents, from their general worry to their specific concerns about the conditions of the schools and their children's welfare. These schools were not neutral philanthropic institutions, but rather community-empire engagements focused on reprogramming children, wherein western education was weaponised against local ways of knowing.[35]

The work of the girls schools, where Conner held positions, became increasingly entangled not just with expansionism and the politics of education in Egypt, but also with the conditions of slavery in Egypt. These schools were places where both freed and enslaved children were enrolled by enslavers and missionaries;[36] and while the UPCNA followed an anti-slavery platform, it also took advantage of the vulnerability of previously enslaved children.[37] This was the case during Conner's tenure in Egypt, where previously enslaved children, especially young girls were taken to the UPCNA run boarding schools to be converted to Christianity and subsequently trained to serve the UPCNA's mission. For instance, in 1887 during Conner's tenure at the school, twelve formerly enslaved girls were taken from the Home for Freed Slaves and moved to the Azbakeya boarding school to be trained as missionaries.[38] A report written by one of the school's administrators mentions this transfer and provides indirect insight into the experience of these schools from the perspective of the freed girls entering them. She noted, "[the girls] came to us much prejudiced against me. Strange stories had been told [to] them of how we would make them work, abuse them, and make them Christians."[39] We should be sceptical of this administrator's incredulity, especially if these schools were modelled after North American residential schools. These schools were tools to colonise and christianise Egyptians, both freed and enslaved.

So far, I have described Harriet Conner's collecting and missionary work, both from a global perspective and in the specific context of mission schools in Egypt. She may well have been considered a contemporary philanthropic figure, but she actively participated in colonisation through the educational indoctrination of children and the collection of antiquities. This intersection, moreover, makes her collection of a mummified child all the more complex and problematic. The irony does not escape me that during her tenure of over a decade at these schools, participating in a colonial structure focused on children, she somehow acquired the body of a child which would eventually be donated to the BVA. Including Conner's missionary work and its impact on children in the narrative for this mummified child illustrates that provenancing can entail more than tracing how so-called objects came into the hands of collectors; provenancing can politicise the relationship between those collectors, collecting, and colonialism.

Michigan Context

At roughly the same time that Harriet Conner was collecting in Egypt, the BVA was establishing itself in northern Michigan, specifically in the town of Petoskey in Emmet County. The BVA's collecting landscape was enabled by, if not modelled on, federal policies and common practices of dispossession, industrialism, and mission work on Native land. The BVA was formed as a Methodist community in 1875 by settlers, missionaries, and industrialists, and it stands today (in 2024) as a resort community on the lands of the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians. Between 2015 and 2021, the Waganakising Odawak community

sued the state of Michigan indicating that the 1855 Treaty of Detroit established and preserved a reservation that includes the area of Petoskey and the land on which the BVA stands.

Although the relationship between the Ojibwe and Odawa, missionaries, and dispossession varies over time, the history of the Waganakising Odawak reservation shows that the BVA was able to acquire its land, form its community, and develop due to the dispossession of Indigenous people. For example, in 1870, the status of the reservation was politically contested, resulting in the district court ruling in 2019 that the 1855 Treaty "could not plausibly be read to have created a reservation.".[40] This contestation reflected the federal government's earlier shift in "Indian policy," where reservation land was broken up into individual pieces of land called "allotments."[41] The aim of this new allotment system was to break up tribal lands by transferring land ownership away from the community and to individual members of the community. By dividing the land in this way, it became possible for settlers, industrialists, and the government to appropriate allotments that were then opened up for homesteading, religious communities, and industrial development.

The political pressure that instigated the destabilisation of the reservation status, making way for the foundation of the BVA, was directly linked to the region's industrial development and the settlers that this development brought. Both settlers and agents of the railroad companies in northern Michigan came in and were able to purchase land in Petoskey because the land had been broken up into individual tracts. This process is precisely how the BVA was founded. The Grand Rapids and Indiana (GR&I) Railroad, which had built a line near Petoskey, partnered with a group of Methodist settlers to purchase the land upon which they would go on to establish the BVA community.[42] Figures from this Methodist community and representatives from the railroad company "acquired" the land by traveling to the "various Indian owners" of the property and convincing them to sell their allotments.[43] In this way, the GR&I Railroad company worked in concerted effort with settlers to dispossess Indigenous people of their land so that the BVA could be established in Petoskey. While this sketch is not an exhaustive overview of the contemporary practices of settler-colonial land grabbing, it indicates how dispossession enabled the foundation of this particular missionary collector group. This insight is necessary because, in a densities project, the group's foundations cannot be separated from their colonial collecting; they represent entangled histories that contextualise each other.

The introduction of the rail line near Petoskey and the establishment of the BVA contributed not only to dispossession, but also simultaneously to an influx of settlers in the region. This colonisation intensified missionary efforts, both locally among the Indigenous Odawa and Ojibwe communities in Michigan and abroad. As the BVA developed from a small religious community into a more complex association, its members became increasingly focused on missionary work. Around the turn of the 1890s, the BVA became a missionary hub for

foreign missionaries with the establishment of the Bay View Missionary Institute. Missionary activity and the institute itself were primarily women-run and eventually focused on colonial contexts, like Egypt. Notably, in 1888 the institute brought in female missionaries to speak on several topics, including "Missionary Experience on the Nile."[44] As part of the education series at the Association, reverend and scholar Camden Cobern spoke to the community about ancient Egypt, and in 1891 there was an entire series of speakers on Egyptological topics.[45] Presumably, this focus on missionary activity in Egypt is what precipitated the BVA's interest in acquiring Egyptian antiquities and, in particular, Egyptian mummified human remains. The collecting activities of the BVA represent not just a fascination with Mediterranean antiquities by missionaries and Christian organisations, but reflect the environments that enabled collection. Not only was the BVA involved in colonial dispossession and missionary work in local and foreign contexts, but it actively participated in the expropriation of cultural heritage from areas of occupation, such as Egypt. Colonisation and missionary activity facilitated the landscape of collecting in northern Michigan, and these legacies should not be separated from the provenance of this mummified child.

Conclusion

Provenance narratives can be arenas of political struggle that, when engaged responsibly, seek to make clear the relationship between ancient Mediterranean collections and multiple apparatuses of colonisation. How this mummified child came to the BVA, and to the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology thereafter, is a politicised story which I have chosen to re-tell by centring actors and institutions of colonialism. In building this narrative, we can see how Harriet Conner and the BVA operated in and benefited from the various systems of colonialism functioning in nineteenth-century Michigan and Egypt. It is essential to make these modern colonial realities part of this mummified child's story and provenance in order to move past solely material-legal dimensions of provenancing.

Collectors and collections share entangled histories that, if taken up holistically and politically, can complicate the very idea and practice of provenancing. All the threads of this Egyptian mummified child's story highlight not just the colonial matrices that Mediterranean museology must account for, if it wishes to participate in processes of decolonisation, but they offer opportunities to participate in that process. While this research is itself not decolonising, insofar as it does not engage in the material repatriation of Indigenous land nor rematration of Indigenous lifeways, applying densities to provenancing in this case reveals an opportunity to materially invest in local decolonising Land Back efforts in Michigan. Moreover, it allows us to account for the ways that university museums and collections – and not just the university as an amorphous institution – have caused and benefited from indigenous dispossession. At the same time, density visiblises the multiple locations of ancient Mediterranean collections within the

complex picture of colonial projects from Egypt to North America. There will be tensions and stakes to a provenance approach in which the narrative focuses on collectors, mission schools, and dispossession, rather than bodies and objects as property. These stakes are political and revolve around (1) centring the voices and desired ways forward of formerly colonised communities, descendant communities, and indigenous communities; (2) joining with work already being done on the impact of missionary activity, as well as boarding schools in Egypt and Michigan; and (3) supporting the political struggle of The Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and Land Back movements. Future research directions should also include joining the ongoing discussions of how these communities resisted and continue to resist within these colonial and political contexts. These three calls to action acknowledge the ways in which ancient Mediterranean collections are implicated in modern politics and the ways in which collections do not remain "ancient." The narrative that I have put forth in this chapter, therefore, represents stories for people and communities and not, as is so often the case in provenance research, a property regime.

Notes

1 I would like to thank Terry Wilfong for providing both the opportunity to explore this topic and for his support as it developed. I also want to thank Artemis Leontis for her guidance during the process as well as Lauren Talalay. I am indebted to my colleagues from the 2023 University of Michigan Critical Indigenous Studies seminar, from which the direction of this research grew. I am also grateful to both this volume's editors and other contributors for their feedback. It is here that I want to acknowledge that although this child has no exact documented burial location or associated belongings, this young child was never "anonymous" to the community which cared for this child.

2 For example, in the American Alliance of Museums documentation guidelines, punctuation itself reflects hierarchies of information that privileges ownership and transactions of ownership (Rother et al. 2022, 19).

3 Property regimes refer to political and social systems that define rules of ownership and structure relationships within the context of property ownership. Discussing a property regime – rather than property "rights" – focuses on the radiating ways in which "property" typically organises discourses and practices even outside of strictly judicial and legal contexts, such as in provenance research.

4 Mazza 2023. Partage refers to a colonial system of dividing the ownership of finds from an excavation between foreign excavators, funding parties and host governments. This kind of division was common in Egypt before the 1983 antiquities protection law.

5 Moreton-Robinson (2015, xii) notes that "possessive logics" are logics that operate to sustain whiteness as a "power regime," both "reproducing and reaffirming the state's ownership, control and domination" over and within property rights. I extend Moreton-Robinson's concept to provenance to suggest that possessive logics also operate in the context of provenancing, in order to continually invest in the ownership of "objects" in museums under euro/western property regimes.

6 Kovach 2021, 30.

7 Recent calls for "decolonising" and "indigenising" the study of the ancient Mediterranean are evidenced by the joint AIA/SCS annual meetings' session topics from the most recent years. At the 2023 AIA Annual Meeting, for example, there was

both a colloquium on "Decolonizing Archaeology" and a workshop on "Decolonizing Agendas and Contrasting Approaches." At the 2024 SCS meeting, there was a panel organised by the Mountaintop coalition on "Indigenous Perspectives: Ancient and Modern." These calls are also reflected in the proliferation of panels organised around the topic "decolonising the museum" (e.g., the 2023 Towards a more Inclusive Classics III: Material Culture workshop's panel on "Decolonising the Museum"). I employ quotes around the term "indigenising" because I am sceptical about the intent and success of broad calls for indigenisation from within Mediterranean studies and question the appropriateness of the term "indigenising" in contexts that do not involve the concrete rematriation of Indigenous lifeways.

8 For examples see, Förster et al. 2018.
9 Förster et al. 2018, 4.
10 Förster et al. 2018. I am cautious, however, of the object biographical approach because it risks paternalistic gesturing for a subject that remains objectified when there has not been epistemic transformation of the relationship to that subject.
11 Jain 2021, 125.
12 However, it would be short-sighted to view property, boarding schools, or dispossession as totally unconnected under a western property regime. Moreover, "dispossession" is a word the reflects western relationships to land as a kind of property.
13 This chapter operationalises the analytic of "density" in dialogue with both Chris Anderson (2009) and Jessica Bissett Perea's (2021) theorising of density. The analytic of density initially served as an epistemological critique of essentialism, inspired by a 2005 essay written by historian and professor of African American studies Robin D.G. Kelley entitled, "On the Density of Black Being," in *Scratch*, edited by Christine Kim (New York: Studio Museum of Harlem, 2005).
14 Anderson 2009.
15 Perea 2021, 13.
16 Anderson 2009; Perea 2021.
17 Talalay and Root 2015.
18 Parent, Abd el-Gawad, and Blouin 2020. See especially Abd el-Gawad's body of scholarship on "Egypt's Dispersed Heritage Project," as well as her contribution in Chapter 3 of this volume, which argues for meaningful consultation and involvement of Egyptians as descendant communities, in all discussions regarding the collection and display of ancient Egyptian human remains.
19 Abd el-Gawad 2021, 124.
20 Abd el-Gawad 2024, 252.
21 As of the date of this publication, I have been unable to locate a bill of sale to or document of purchase by Harriet Conner for this mummified child. Thus, there is a gap in the provenance narrative relating to this child's "acquisition," which may reflect an archival silence produced by colonial practices of collecting.
22 Wilbour 1936, 580–84.
23 "Kelsey Museum Holds Egyptian Treasures" 1971.
24 United Presbyterian Church of North America 1890, 88.
25 Stewart 1880, 156; Elder 1958, 121.
26 Watson 1898, 440, 445.
27 United Presbyterian Church of North America 1891, 58–66; Watson 1898, 445, 448.
28 Sharkey 2008, 20.
29 Sharkey 2011, 27–28.
30 Sharkey 2008, 12.
31 For a discussion of "Egyptomania" and its development, see Malvoisin, this volume (34, 36–38).
32 Sharkey 2011, 24–28. In the late-nineteenth century, the slave trade was outlawed in Egypt, but slavery itself was not. At this time, western anti-slavery interventions

served to legitimise colonial control in Africa, since weaponising the racialised imagery of a slavery-riddled Africa justified the humanitarian intervention discourse that permeated missionary rhetoric. Moreover, outlawing the slave trade created the need for homes for freed people who had had been trafficked in the slave trade. The UPCNA began to target this population of freed people for conversion and missionary training.

33 Said 1994, 223.
34 Watson 1898, 448.
35 Education included subjects such as English, bible studies, housekeeping, and so on, and each subject enforced conformity to western roles prescribed for Egyptian women within colonial and Christian regimes. These subjects helped to dismantle local ways of knowing and being. Sedra (2011), for example, discusses how missionary education's attack on oral culture (for example, within the Coptic community) enabled the replacement of this kind of knowledge with the hegemony of literacy.
36 One such example of an enslaved child enrolled in a mission school is mentioned in a personal letter dated to 1882 from a missionary named Anna Thompson, which was digitised by the Cowley County Historical Society Museum ("Thompson Families in Cowley County"). Harriet Conner (or "Miss Conner") is described in this letter as both a coworker at the mission school with Thompson and as her travel companion to archeological sites in the Fayum region. This letter makes no mention as to why an enslaved child was enrolled. Perhaps, she was enrolled in order to learn the domestic skills taught at the schools or to be converted. However, if the Presbyterian foreign missionary philosophy of the late nineteenth century in Egypt mirrored the Home Missions' philosophies around that same time, then the schools may have prioritised educating and christianising children (freed or enslaved) over dismantling systems of slavery or confronting systemic inequities (Presbyterian Church in the United States of America 1882, 20–21).
37 Sharkey 2008, 77.
38 Baron 2020, 42.
39 Anna Thompson's annual report quoted by Baron (2020, 52).
40 Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians v. Whitmer et al. 2021, 13.
41 Cassidy 2012, 9.
42 Carter 1966, 18.
43 Carter 1966, 21.
44 Carter 1966, 72.
45 Carter 1966, 88–89.

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SECTION 2

Teaching/Learning

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6

THE PEOPLING THE PAST PROJECT

Multivocality and Multimodality in Ancient Mediterranean Studies Teaching

Christine L. Johnston, Sabrina C. Higgins, Megan Daniels, and Victoria Austen

Introduction[1]

A common critique of the study of ancient history is that it is "institutional and exclusionary; still the stuff of galleries, museums and UNESCO World Heritage sites; of prized images, objects and structures, rather than of living humanity."[2] This focus on "great men," "big history," and the material culture of antiquity's wealthiest inhabitants has often been seen as both a result of – and an ongoing contributor to – the lack of diversity in the disciplines of classics, history, and archaeology. These inequities are rooted in the legacies of early modern European education, and include pervasive metanarratives about ancient Mediterranean history that perpetuate Eurocentric perspectives and agendas.[3] As a result, scholarship and teaching on the ancient Mediterranean world remains deeply entangled with racist and exclusionary agendas that masquerade as detached from the lived experiences of its scholars, educators, and students.[4] However, as demonstrated by the contributions within the present volume, scholars are increasingly using initiatives involving multivocality, multilingualism, community engagement, outreach, and public scholarship to make inroads towards divesting from these legacies and harmful practices.[5] In this chapter, we outline Peopling the Past's contribution to these endeavours through the creation of multimodal and multivocal teaching resources that enable students to see beyond traditional narratives and metanarratives and to be active participants in learning about the past.

Responding to the Challenges of Ancient Mediterranean Studies Teaching

Exclusion and bias within disciplines related to the study of ancient Mediterranean histories and cultures has become a topic of increasing scrutiny over the past

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decades, although many minoritised scholars have long voiced their critiques of this aspect of the field.[6] Disciplines that focus on Mediterranean antiquity, including classics and classical archaeology, have been criticised for the Eurocentric and patriarchal biases within their constituted canons,[7] as well as what scholar Dan-el Padilla Peralta has rightly denounced as a "collective pathology" that "lacks the courage to acknowledge its historical and ongoing inability to value scholars from underrepresented groups."[8] Scholar Pria Jackson argues that countering these longstanding metanarratives cannot be limited to moderate actions such as the "passive resistance" of citing or promoting scholars of colour, which "will never be enough to uproot Whiteness"[9] instead, educators must explicitly challenge "the lifetime of skewed representation" absorbed by students.[10] To accomplish this, it is necessary for those working in ancient Mediterranean studies to "[reckon] with how [the field] has been invested all over the world in histories and ongoing realities of colonialism and racialized extractive capitalism of many kinds."[11] This reckoning is particularly important within the realms of pedagogy and public scholarship, which are two distinct yet intertwined arenas; such a reckoning must also acknowledge that "the classroom is a political arena"[12] in which "no education is politically neutral."[13]

Although there has been increasing discourse about these issues, initiatives promoting diversity within ancient Mediterranean studies have followed general academic trends in failing to address intersectional inequities.[14] For example, Heath-Stout's 2020 study of authorship in archaeological publications demonstrated that knowledge producers remain largely homogeneous—white, cisgender, male, and heterosexual.[15] Despite demographic shifts towards gender parity, underrepresentation among marginalised authors persists in relation to sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity.[16] Inequities in publishing appear to have been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the rise of care work and the exponential increase in teaching labour disproportionately impacted caregivers and minoritised scholars.[17] This imbalance creates significant equity and professional development issues around research productivity and time-to-tenure, which generate long-term compensation disparities, exacerbating long-standing institutional inequities in department service and mentorship labour.[18]

The Peopling the Past project was conceived in response to these exclusionary narratives and disciplinary inequities within ancient Mediterranean studies.[19] Launched in September 2020, this project is a multimedia digital humanities initiative run in collaboration by seven white settler junior scholars, primarily cisgender heterosexual women, who specialise in related disciplines focusing on the archaeology and histories of ancient Mediterranean, West Asian, and North African cultures. The members of the project produce open-access multimedia resources for teaching and learning about antiquity, focusing on the individuals and stories that are often lost or overshadowed by traditional historical narratives. The goal of the project is to challenge the narrow stereotypes of who gets to tell history, as well as whose stories are told. By making cutting-edge scholarship

publicly accessible, Peopling the Past aims to broaden general knowledge about real people in antiquity while creating a space for more voices to take part, thereby transforming traditional narratives. Through a variety of media formats (blog posts, videos, podcast episodes), the Peopling the Past project participates in public history by sharing knowledge with enthusiasts and providing open-access teaching resources for use in the secondary and postsecondary classroom.

The project seeks to respond to Heath-Stout's call for the creation of "knowledge in diverse and multivocal communities in order to rigorously understand the human past."[20] By being exposed to the work of scholars, professionals, and students (working both inside and outside of the academy), the Peopling the Past audience is introduced to diverse perspectives and forms of knowledge created and integrated into deeper understanding of past peoples by experts from many different career paths and diverse backgrounds and identities. This prioritisation of multivocality is rooted in the valuing of the "passion of experience" (as outlined by bell hooks[21]), which builds upon long-standing critiques by Black, queer, Indigenous, and postcolonial scholars of the epistemological fallacies of objectivity and neutrality endemic in western-dominant scientific discourse.[22] This epistemic approach or "philosophical privileging of reason and disconnect between the heart and mind" leads to a "science without compassion" that "perpetuate(s) prevailing epistemologies of hierarchy, domination, and violence," and which are insufficient in working to "repair the damage caused by Western, colonial modes of thought."[23]

Multimodality and Multivocality in Learning Science

The teaching materials produced by the Peopling the Past project follow a constructivist learning approach, which is the dominant paradigm of learning employed in humanities and social sciences teaching.[24] Although methods within constructivism vary,[25] the core premise is that knowledge is actively formed by the learner through the integration of new information into their individual and cultural knowledge structures.[26] Such active construction of knowledge and meaning differs from traditional teaching methods, in which instructors attempted to "deposit" knowledge to passive students through lecture.[27] Constructivist teaching methods are often employed using learning-centred curriculum design, in which students are engaged in the critical assessment of new information and encouraged to form conceptual connections between new and existing knowledge.[28] This active engagement based on critical thinking and cognitive scaffolding allows for what is known as "deep" or "significant learning."[29]

The taxonomy of significant learning, developed by L. Dee Fink, incorporates both cognitive and affective domains that are connected relationally rather than structured hierarchically (Figure 6.1).[30] This taxonomy highlights the importance of incorporating traditional cognitive learning objectives, such as knowledge acquisition,[31] as well as broader affective and social goals, such as the development

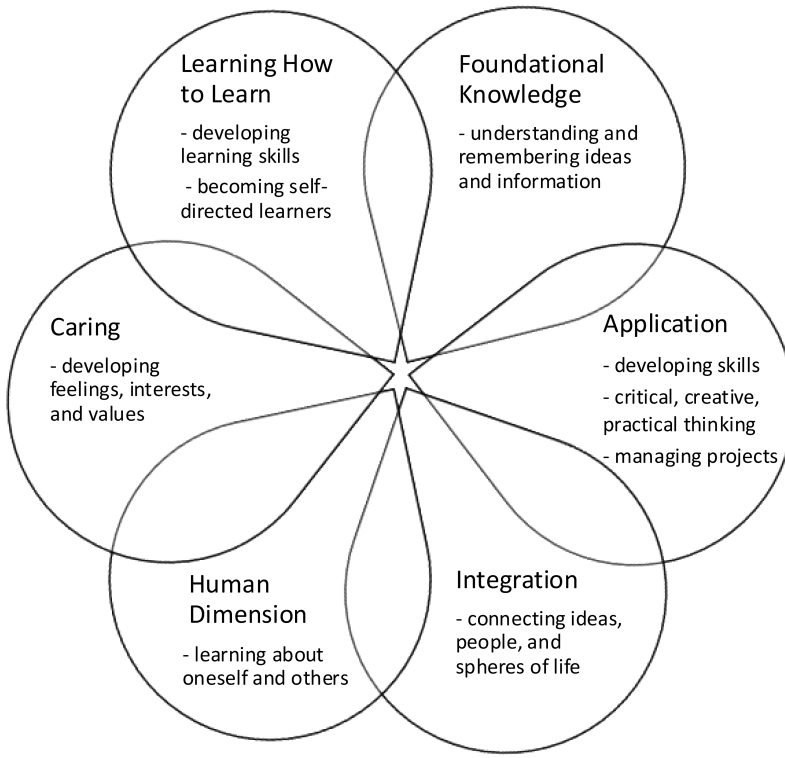

FIGURE 6.1 Fink's Taxonomy of Significant Learning (adapted from Fink 2003a, 30).

of communication and leadership skills and strategies for ongoing learning.[32] Integrating cognitive and affective goals sets the learner up for success by providing opportunities to develop not only "capacities for critical thinking and complex problem solving," but also "respect for people different from oneself, principled ethical behaviour, lifelong learning, and effective interpersonal interaction and teamwork."[33] Multimedia, as rich-format resources, are particularly effective in achieving both cognitive and affective learning goals.

The term multimedia can be applied alternatively to aspects of information delivery (i.e., the device used to deliver content), presentation (i.e., the formats used in presenting the content), or reception (i.e., the senses used by the learner to receive the content).[34] The latter aspect, sensory reception, is connected to the concept of media richness, which refers to the number of different senses and interpretative abilities needed to process information. Media richness, then, can be measured according to the number of cues or "symbol systems employed to communicate through the medium,"[35] including verbal, pictorial, physical, and paralinguistic cues. Richness is thus enhanced with each additional medium of

communication included, such as the addition of graphics to text, the addition of audio to video images (Figure 6.2),[36] or through the integration of interactive and/or feedback elements. The learning benefits associated with rich-format media are supported by the dual-coding theory of cognition, in which learning retention is thought to be enhanced through the processing of information through dual verbal and pictorial information-processing channels (Figure 6.3).[37] Rich-format media has demonstrated benefits in supporting learning-focused outcomes. Such benefits relate to technical skills development and information acquisition (e.g., sharing knowledge), as well as constructivist knowledge creation, especially when the content focuses on helping the user to draw conceptual links.[38]

The principles associated with media richness and multimodal learning have long been integrated into the related subfields of ancient Mediterranean studies teaching, particularly through the incorporation of images and graphics into both published texts and the classroom environment (e.g., through slide decks or PowerPoints).[39] Visualisation and simulation tools are providing new opportunities for both student engagement and active learning.[40] Furthermore, providing

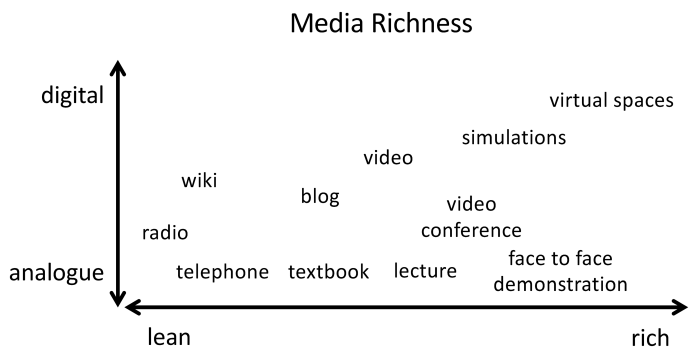

FIGURE 6.2 The Continuum of Media Richness (adapted from Bates 2015, 242).

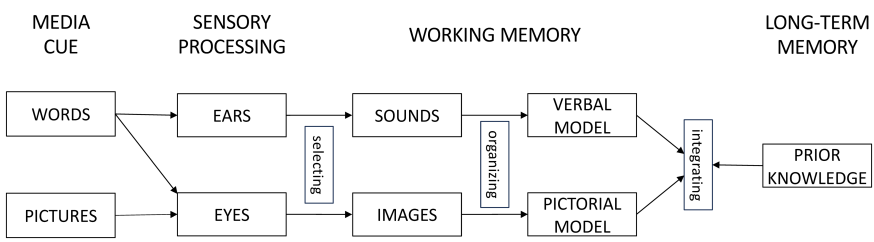

FIGURE 6.3 Information processing according to the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (adapted from Mayer 2009, 61, fig. 3.1).

students with content in different modalities has been shown to help to combat fatigue and to maintain learner interest.[41] However, since rich-format media, like video, can compress a considerable amount of information into a short timeframe, instructional design must focus on avoiding cognitive overload. One way to avoid this is to structure content through explicit signposting in order to prepare students for what they will learn.[42]

In addition to benefits in learning retention and student engagement, the dialogic or conversational aspect of rich-format media, like podcast or video interviews, both enhance student learning and help to facilitate the induction of students into communities of practice.[43] In learning science, "communities of practice" are defined as "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly."[44] Course content and activities are considered "authentic" and able to induct learners into communities of practice when classroom materials and practices match those of practitioners within the field.[45] In addition, exposure to scholars and researchers working in different subfields, both in and outside of academia, introduces different perspectives and voices into the curriculum, broadening the communities into which students are inducted.[46] Multivocality in the interpretation and presentation of the past "is essential in order to draw out the voices and experiences of marginalized or underrepresented communities."[47] This type of multivocality in communities of practice entails more than simply being provided a "seat at the table" in terms of knowledge interpretation, but rather a comprehensive integration of all aspects of research and knowledge production along with public-engagement strategies that focus on "teaching a tolerance for ambiguity and multivocality."[48] Peopling the Past content is designed around these core pillars of multivocality and multimodality in order to induct its audience into communities of practice.

Peopling the Past and Ancient History Learning

Peopling the Past produces content in three digital formats: podcast episodes, short videos, and blog posts. Each blog, video, and podcast episode features a guest specialist who introduces the historiography of the topic under discussion, overviews the data available for analysis, and discusses their interpretations and conclusions. There are numerous intersecting themes tying together the blogs, podcasts, and videos, allowing them to be combined into multimodal learning modules, with a goal towards expansive geographic and temporal coverage. For example, the series of blogs from February 2022,[49] which focused on food and drink in the ancient Mediterranean, can be combined with Video 20: Beer in Ancient Egypt with Amr Shahat,[50] and Podcast Season 2, Episode 9, on Bread-Making and Roman Bakeries with Jared Benton.[51] The blog posts from April 2022,[52] on human migration, can be used with Podcast Season 3, Episode 10, focused on Women's Mobility and Migration in the Roman Empire with Marie-Adeline Le Guennec,[53]

and Video 7: Rebecca Futo Kennedy Talks About Migrant Women in the Ancient Greek World.[54]

In design, the Peopling the Past project focuses on making cutting-edge research as available and accessible as possible. Accordingly, the content is developed for a non-specialist general audience, with additional resources for further research provided on the project website. All content is made available on popular, free platforms (such as YouTube, Spotify, and Apple Podcasts), is shared via social media (Facebook, Instagram, BlueSky, and X [formerly Twitter]), and is released with a Creative Commons Share-Alike License.[55] Though there is an immense amount of digital content and media produced related to antiquity, Peopling the Past distinguishes its multimedia content through showcasing underrepresented people and stories, both ancient and modern, and producing free content designed according to pedagogical theory and methods.

Podcast

Audio materials have long been recognised for their ability to offer a number of educational advantages, including ease of use and their ability to influence both cognition and the emotional aspects of learning by conveying immediacy and personal connection.[56] Over the past two decades, podcasts have emerged as a useful addition to the repertoire of auditory tools that educators can deploy to enhance student engagement within the classroom, as they provide opportunities for "direct communications and interactions … beyond [the] temporal and spatial limitations of conventional face-to-face education."[57] Moreover, they expose students to a variety of creative, dialogic, and collaborative modes of inquiry, showcasing the different ways in which learners can construct and communicate their own research.[58] Podcasts can also enhance learning flexibility and enrich the student learning experience,[59] especially when they are used as supplementary materials to broaden or deepen a learner's understanding of a particular topic by providing them with "alternative perspectives on content previously delivered" [60] and enabling "further and deeper exploration of topics."[61]

The Peopling the Past podcast episodes are designed as self-contained learning resources, roughly thirty minutes in length.[62] Each episode has a dedicated landing page on the Peopling the Past website from which listeners can launch the podcast; this page also includes a transcript, suggestions for further reading, a brief synopsis of the episode, a biography of the guest, and a gallery of relevant artefacts, maps, and/or other images.[63] In this way, we seek to negate some of the potential limitations of the podcast format, namely lack of visual content and the difficulty of taking notes from exclusively auditory media.[64] Each episode, moreover, is designed to complement and enrich themes that are often addressed in an ancient history classroom by providing additional context and insight into a more specialised aspect of a broader topic. For example, lectures focusing on Greek art could be paired with our podcast episode "Golden Years and Silver Hair: the

Greek Art of Aging with Susan Matheson" (Season 1, Episode 10).[65] Additionally, the episode "(Not so) Risky Business: the Potential Perils of Childbirth in Ancient Rome with Anna Bonnell Freidin" (Season 3, Episode 9) would pair well with lectures pertaining to the lives of women, the practice of midwifery, and childbirth in the Roman world – important but often occluded aspects of life in antiquity.[66]

The conversational tone of the podcast, which is achieved through informal interviews with subject-area experts, also serves to model the inquiry process. By structuring the podcast in this manner, we hope that students can begin to see themselves as scholars as well, albeit at a different stage in their academic career. We can also envision ways in which the podcast might be used as a pedagogical tool to facilitate active learning opportunities in the classroom setting, such as through podcast creation.[67] In doing so, we can enhance the student's learning experience through hands-on learning activities that foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills, while encouraging them to engage with the multimodal and multivocal aspects of public scholarship through their own participation in knowledge production.[68]

Videos

Peopling the Past video content is designed to enhance learning retention and to limit the cognitive overload that can arise from rich-format media. These goals are achieved through three interrelated methods: content signposting, conceptual mapping, and inquiry modelling. Videos are explicitly structured around three guiding questions that are introduced with designated slides and read out loud by the guest expert: "what topic are you talking about today?"; "what sources or data do you look at?"; and "how can this topic or material tell us about real people in the past?" This structure serves to signpost the topic's foundational knowledge, as well as the conceptual links between the research question, the source data, and the expert's interpretations and conclusions. Signposting has been identified as one of the key strategies for reducing extraneous sensory processing, managing essential processing, and fostering generative processing in multimedia learning.[69]

Content signposting in the videos also serves to explicitly scaffold viewer learning through conceptual mapping.[70] One way that this can be done is by connecting video content to modern historical examples.[71] For example, in Video 11 on graffiti in ancient Egypt,[72] Jitse Dijkstra begins by showing images of modern graffiti, while in Video 1, Debby Sneed introduces the viewer to the study of disability in ancient Greece by first establishing connections to modern disability studies in contemporary contexts.[73] Similarly, both Roselyn Campbell and Amr Shahat conclude their discussions of Paleo-oncology[74] (Video 13) and beer production in ancient Egypt[75] (Video 20) by addressing the ways in which the study of cancer and food and drink production in antiquity can inform our understanding of issues related to health, medical practices, and patient care today. Many videos explicitly connect inequities and biases in modern contexts to biases in the past and in

the disciplinary history of ancient Mediterranean studies. Examples include the videos by Rebecca Futo Kennedy on Migrant Women in Ancient Greece[76] (Video 7), Kara Cooney on Women and Power in Ancient Egypt[77] (Video 14), Danielle Candelora on the Hyksos[78] (Video 16), and Anne Austin on ancient Egyptian Tattooing[79] (Video 17). Each of these speakers highlights the impact of modern and ancient biases in the reductive and harmful categorisation of individuals and groups in the past and present.

By highlighting the conceptual links between the research question, the collected data, and the historical conclusions, each speaker also effectively models the historical inquiry process, which serves to induct learners into communities of practice.[80] The videos facilitate this induction through the use of a narrative structure and a conversational tone, which have been shown to enhance information retention in multimedia learning.[81] The dialogic structure of the videos also gives the speaker the opportunity to share metacognitive reflections on the recursive and iterative nature of historical research as it passes through different phases of project development.[82] The research experience and the methods employed can be highlighted for the viewer, emphasising the often multidisciplinary and experimental nature of ancient Mediterranean studies research.[83] The dialogic modelling of all stages of project development highlights the important aspect of multivocality in all stages of historical inquiry.[84]

Blogs

For over twenty years, blogs have been a part of what scholars have called Web 2.0, which reflects a "more decentralized system of information access, generation, connection, dissemination, and remixing."[85] Blogs are part of the "new literacies," that is, new ways of communicating knowledge beyond traditional texts in multimedia environments, providing new inroads for enhanced student engagement and learning.[86] Peopling the Past blogs are short-form content (averaging 800–1000 words), each of which is supported by multimedia (images, maps, videos) and further resources for interested readers. In addition to independent posts, Peopling the Past produces a number of theme-based series, including the "Unknown Peoples" series, which features posts on understudied and/or misunderstood people in the ancient world (e.g., Blog 16 on the Mitanni;[87] Blog 10 on the "Mountain Peoples" of the Zagros[88]). The most popular ongoing series is the "Grad Student Features," each of which presents a short interview with a current graduate student, focusing on their topic of research, the sources and data that they use, and how their research sheds light on real people in the past.[89] In addition to these ongoing series, Peopling the Past also runs month-long features throughout the year, often in conjunction with specific events. For instance, in April, when Earth Day occurs, we have featured topics such as human–environment relations and human migration; in October, we have featured content in conjunction with Halloween, including concepts of the afterlife and the symbolism of monsters in antiquity.

The guiding principle of the blogs is to be both entertaining and informative, while simultaneously encouraging readers to consider the deeper meanings behind topics often treated superficially in popular culture. For example, the annual Halloween series addresses popular concepts often trivialised in the media, such as the "monstrous" and the undead. By presenting research on ancient beliefs and practices, readers are encouraged to reflect on the deeper symbolisms, experiences, and emotions at play in, for instance, steps taken by humans to appease their dead ancestors.[90] As with the videos and podcasts, the blogs are designed to model the inquiry process; they begin with questions of foundational knowledge related to data and analysis, and lead to a final question on how the scholar's research helps us to better understand real people who lived in antiquity. The graduate student features, in particular, allow the audience to witness the creation and implementation of diverse ongoing projects that walk the reader through research questions, data, and outcomes, thus helping undergraduate students in becoming self-directed learners and potential future graduate students themselves.[91]

The focus of the blog posts – on real humans and their experiences – engenders a deeper sense of caring and empathy, and the content of the landing pages on the website provides the reader with the motivation and resources to pursue further understanding. For example, Blog 20 by Anja Krieger,[92] part of the "Unknown Peoples" series, provides a strong case study for how blogs can be used to highlight misunderstood peoples and foster empathy with their experiences. Krieger's blog focuses on sailors' daily lives in antiquity, and it starts off by introducing a methodological problem: namely, the archaeological focus on ships and shipwrecks as indices of trade and technology, which overshadows an understanding of ships as a working environment for humans. Krieger then walks readers through the various approaches for seeing the real people who spent their livelihoods at sea, focusing on both tangible evidence (e.g., specific artefacts from sailors' lives) and intangible sources (e.g., studying how humans experience their surroundings, known as phenomenology). In this way, "archaeologists can piece together how humans in antiquity interacted with their maritime environment and can give a voice to people who are otherwise difficult to grasp,"[93] encouraging readers to reflect further upon experiences that are often overshadowed by traditional scholarship.[94]

Conclusion

A guiding objective for the Peopling the Past team is to engage in public history with the goal of becoming "democratic educators" who "share knowledge outside the classroom," and "dispel the notion that academic workers are out of touch with a world outside the hallowed halls of academe."[95] Public engagement is a crucial part of breaking down the barriers between academia and the general public, and is integral to combating the perpetuation of historical inaccuracies, harmful legacies, and "master narratives."[96] This approach follows methods

employed in Indigenous archaeologies, which Sonya Atalay has advanced as "a model for archaeological practice that can be applied globally as it calls for and provides a methodology for collaboration of descendent communities and stakeholders around the world."[97] Through engagement with stakeholders both inside and outside of academia, Peopling the Past aims to contribute to the broader initiatives within ancient Mediterranean studies that strive to recognise and address the extent to which whiteness – and its entanglements with class, gender, sexuality, and ability – is "baked into the habitus and *hexis* of the classicist at every step in their professional formation."[98] By engaging critically with the harmful legacies of the past and historical disciplines, we hope to disrupt these trajectories and to "foreground the political nature of education."[99]

Digital media and resources like those produced by Peopling the Past (among many other projects) aim to play a role in broadening and diversifying the topics engaged with in the ancient Mediterranean studies classroom – particularly those addressing inequities in history and historical teaching.[100] The focus on multivocality, through the platforming of diverse scholarly perspectives, is a fundamental decolonial method used to achieve this goal by introducing critiques that underscore the political nature of science and history, demonstrating that "interpretations of the past are not diminished by multivocal perspectives but are enriched by them."[101] In addition to content topics, the employment of constructivist methods and the incorporation of rich-format media and digital resources create "significant learning" opportunities that integrate cognitive and affective educational goals and enhance learning retention. These multimodal and multivocal learning resources can thus enliven present and future spaces for this necessary holistic engagement in knowledge production.

Notes

1 We would like to acknowledge the UBC Open Access Fund for Humanities and Social Sciences Research for supporting this chapter as Open Access. We would also like to extend our deep gratitude to all of our blog, video, and podcast guests for sharing their time and expertise with us.

2 Wengrow 2018, October 2.

3 Said 1978; Vlassopoulos 2007. See also Abd el-Gawad, this volume, for a discussion of the ways that modern descendent communities are often treated as exogenous to the imagined and frozen pasts of their homelands.

4 Rankine 2019, 345–59; Bostick 2020, 283–306; Bostick 2021; Eccleston and Padilla Peralta 2022, 199–218; Futo Kennedy 2023.

5 These practices follow long histories of adoption within Indigenous archaeologies, in which multivocality is viewed as "a critical component in all aspects of archaeological knowledge production and reproduction" (Atalay 2008, 36). Multivocality in this approach is rooted in all components of research and public engagement, with the key awareness that "it is not only archaeologists who feel stewardship responsibilities toward archaeological materials and locations–many groups have rights and responsibilities to the human and material remains and to the knowledge, memories,

and spiritual power that are intimately tied with the places and materials studied by archaeologists" (Atalay 2006, 280–310).

6 See, for example, Yung 2018, February 5; Rankine 2019; Singh Dhindsa 2020; Coleman 2023, February 24. For the use of "minoritized" rather than "minority," see Sotto-Santiago 2019, 72–78.

7 Rabinowitz 1993, 4.

8 Padilla Peralta 2019, January 7. See also Rankine 2019.

9 Jackson 2020, June 11. See also hooks 1994, 147–48.

10 Jackson 2020, June 11. "Ancient Mediterranean studies" is an imperfect term used here to refer to the neighbouring disciplines of ancient history, archaeology, classical studies, egyptology, Nubian studies, assyriology, and West Asian studies (also termed ancient near eastern studies), which focus on the histories and cultures of Europe, Western Asia, and North Africa in antiquity. This often, problematically, centres the Mediterranean – and by extension Eurocentric interpretations – in the study of neighbouring regions; see, for example, Haley 1993; Blouin and Akrigg 2024: 5–7, 10–12, 15–16.

11 Umachandran 2019, June 11. See Abd el-Gawad, this volume, for further discussion.

12 Rabinowitz 1993, 4.

13 hooks 1994, 37. See volume contributions by Abd el-Gawad, Hill, Gallart Marqués, Malvoisin, Rodgers, and Johnston et al..

14 The 2014 survey of the Society of Classical Studies showed that minoritised students representing only 9% of classics undergraduates (https://classicalstudies.org/sites/default/files/ckfinder/files/Numerical(1).pdf), while data from the most recent 2017 survey and minoritised scholars hold approximately 3.5% of tenured professorships (https://classicalstudies.org/professional-matters/departmental-census-report-2017-census). Hill, this volume, includes an expanded discussion of field demographics.

15 Heath-Stout 2020, 1, 8, fig. 1; see also Heath-Stout et al. 2023, 151–65; Hill, this volume. See discussion and references in both for the impacts of fieldwork costs, harassment, ableism, and racism in creating barriers to access and participation.

16 Heath-Stout 2020, 2, 4–7.

17 See, for example, Flaherty 2022, April 21, on COVID-19's impact on female scholars' research productivity. Relatedly, Hoggarth et al. (2021, 1681–702) demonstrate that early career and female archaeologists experienced economic losses, increased workloads, reduced options for research, and heightened personal responsibilities. For the impact of the pandemic on disabled archaeologists, see Wilkie 2022. More generally, a recent study by Douglas et al. (2022) presented the results of surveys of science scholars on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on work areas (research progress, workload, concern about career advancement, support from mentors) and disruptions (physical health, mental health, and caretaking)

18 Dancy et al. 2018, 183–84.

19 https://peoplingthepast.com/

20 Heath-Stout 2020, 17. A comprehensive longitudinal study of authorship and gender in historical research demonstrated the link between increasing diversity of authorship and "the broadening of research agendas and an increased sensitivity to new topics and methodologies in the field" (Risi et al. 2022, 1–2).

21 Such "passion of experience" encompasses the lived realities and ways of knowing derived from one's life experiences, particularly one's suffering (hooks 1994, 71–91). Individuals with a "passion of experience," who often "speak from the margins," are informed by their "closer proximity to issues of inequality over those who study inequality from a distance" (D'Ignazio and Klein 2020, 19; see also Yung 2018).

22 See, for example, Freire 1988; hooks 2003, 127–31; Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2005, 375–91; Atalay 2008; Tuck et al. 2014, 1–23; Rankine 2019; Supernant et al. 2020.

An important critique raised by Atalay (2008, 37), who cites parallel conversations in feminist theory, is the danger of superficial forms of multivocality creating false equivalencies among perspectives, leading to "a loss of power for Indigenous (and other "marginal") groups, who no longer have any claim to truth or greater legitimacy.

23 Surface-Evans 2020, 69–70, 73. Hooks (2003, 131) notes the "dehumanizing" aspect of the promotion of a "calculated objectivism" by a dominant culture. Instead, Surface-Evans advocates for "an epistemology of the heart" which "seeks to dismantle hierarchy and power structures that perpetuate violence through critical awareness and active community-based practice" (2020, 70).

24 Constructivism is a paradigm developed in psychology and the learning sciences; other common paradigms include cognitivism, behaviourism, humanism, and connectivism (Schunk 2020).

25 Different approaches within constructivism include individual, social, cognitive, and postmodern (Biggs and Tang 2011, 22).

26 Novak and Gowin 1984, 7; Michael 2006, 160. For a discussion of the social dimensions of learning, see Logino (1994, 142–43), who argues that knowledge is "constructed not by individuals but by an interactive dialogic community."

27 This form of traditional instruction was famously termed the "Banking Model" of education by Freire 1970.

28 Salomon and Perkins 1998, 3–6. For an overview of the move away from teaching paradigms and towards learning paradigms, see Barr and Tagg 1995, 12–25; Fink 2003a.

29 Fink 2003a, 2003b. This type of learning is sometimes referred to as "Deep Learning" (see Gardiner 1994). A related example of constructivist learning can be found in this volume with Gonzalez et al.'s approach for the Antioch Recovery Project, which involved students as contributors to this project in a flipped classroom, lab-based setting.

30 Fink 2003a.

31 Cognitive goals of this type are often referred to as "fact-oriented" or "memory" learning. Gardiner (1994, v) argues that this type of learning is "of limited value to either [students] or society."

32 Fink 2003a, 29. According to Fink, these broader objectives combine the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor taxonomies of Bloom's famous learning taxonomy.

33 Gardiner 1994: iii. This closely aligns with the "archaeology of the heart," or "epistemology of the heart," advocated for in Indigenous archaeologies (Lyons and Supernant 2020; Surface-Evans 2020). Surface-Evans (2020, 72) also connects this with the "love ethic" advocated for by bell hooks (see, for example, hooks 2003, 131).

34 Mayer 2009, 7.

35 Bates 2015, 241.

36 Bates 2015.

37 Mayer 2009, 57, 60–68, fig. 3.1. For further discussion of Information Processing Theory, see Mayer 2009.

38 Mayer 2009, 3. Skill development is a frequently noted benefit, particularly in relation to procedural demonstrations with accompanying voiceover. Multimedia also allows learners to pause and replay information, which has proven to increase retention and understanding; see List and Ballenger 2019, 524, 529; and Bates 2015, 232, 243.

39 Multimodal learning, in which each individual learner benefits from exposure to multiple sensory stimuli and the activation of multiple information-processing channels, is not to be confused with learning style theories, which assumed that each learner was predisposed to process information best when received in one specific format.

40 These tools have proven to be particularly useful for enhancing spatial thinking. For example classroom activities using visualisation tools like Google Earth and

Stanford's Orbis, see Daniels and Johnston (2022) and Ratzan (2020, 31–70), respectively. Gonzalez et al., this volume, demonstrate the use of ArcGIS, StoryMaps, and the raster editor program Procreate in classroom learning centred on the digital and spatial reassembly of the Antioch mosaics. For the use of digital reproductions in active learning group assignments, see Johnston et al., this volume.

41 Bates 2015, 263; see also Koumi 2006.
42 Mayer 2009, 57–63; Bates 2015, 243. Video formatting can also address this issue, particularly through content structuring and signposting (Koumi 2006, 27, 95–96, 143–46). See also Derry et al. 2014, 785–812.
43 Brown et al. 1988, 32–42; Stein et al. 2006, 254. For the impact of the "personalization principle" on learning retention, see Mayer 2009, 200.
44 Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015. The concept of "communities of practice" was originally developed by Lave and Wenger 1991; see also The Lux Project (Funke et al., this volume) and the Antioch Recovery Project (Gonzalez et al., this volume) for examples of the development of communities of practice that incorporate undergraduate students.
45 Stein et al. 2006, 239–40.
46 Koumi 2006, 41. Funke et al. (this volume) highlight the ways in which undergraduate students can also be knowledge producers and sharers within communities of practice.
47 Surface-Evans 2020, 72.
48 Atalay 2008, 37–38.
49 https://peoplingthepast.com/2022/02/
50 https://peoplingthepast.com/2022/02/16/video-20-amr-shahat/
51 https://peoplingthepast.com/2021/08/10/podcast-season-2-episode-9-rolling-in-the-dough-bread-making-and-roman-bakeries-with-jared-benton/
52 https://peoplingthepast.com/2022/04/
53 https://peoplingthepast.com/2023/04/04/podcast-season-3-episode-10-marie-adeline-le-guennec/
54 https://peoplingthepast.com/2020/11/12/video-7-rebecca-futo-kennedy/
55 Content is released under a CC BY-SA 4.0 International License.
56 See, for example, Durbridge 1984; and Laaser 1986, 143–52.
57 Carvalho et al. 2009, 132–40.
58 Adams et al. 2021, September 27.
59 McGarr 2009, 311. The flexibility to rewind and re-listen to materials shared on a podcast is especially beneficial to learners for whom English is not their primary language and for students with visual impairments and dyslexia; see Greenfield 2011, 112–14; and Logue 2020, July 23.
60 Lin et al. 2013, 417.
61 McGarr 2009, 317.
62 At the time of publication, the Peopling the Past project has produced three seasons of the podcast: Greek Archaeology (Season 1), Roman Archaeology (Season 2), and Women in the Ancient Mediterranean (Season 3). Season 4 (Cultural Heritage and Legacies of Colonialism) is currently in production.
63 Research suggests that students prefer to listen to podcasts on a computer during dedicated study time (e.g., Lee and Chan 2007, 201–18).
64 On the potential limitations of the podcast format, see e.g., Bell et al. 2007, 70–77.
65 https://peoplingthepast.com/2020/11/17/podcast_10/
66 https://peoplingthepast.com/2023/03/21/podcast-season-3-episode-9-anna-bonnell-freidin/
67 For a sample assignment of podcasting in the classroom, see Higgins et al. 2022.
68 Diphhoorn and McGonigle Leyh 2023, 44.
69 Mayer 2009, 108. See also Bates 2015, 243; Koumi 2006, 27.

70 This approach follows Mayer's (2009, 70) identification of three processes that he deems essential for active learning: "selecting relevant material, organizing selected material, and integrating selected material with existing knowledge."
71 Scaffolding information to existing knowledge is a foundational aspect of constructivist learning, on which see Schunk 2020, 316–17.
72 https://peoplingthepast.com/2020/11/25/video-9-jitse-dijkstra/
73 https://peoplingthepast.com/2020/09/16/video1/
74 https://peoplingthepast.com/2021/07/24/video-13-roselyn-campbell/
75 https://peoplingthepast.com/2022/02/16/video-20-amr-shahat/
76 https://peoplingthepast.com/2020/11/12/video-7-rebecca-futo-kennedy/
77 https://peoplingthepast.com/2021/07/24/video-14-kara-cooney/
78 https://peoplingthepast.com/2021/09/01/video-16-danielle-candelora/
79 https://peoplingthepast.com/2021/09/15/video-17-anne-austin/
80 See supra no. 46.
81 Koumi 2006, 110; Mayer 2009, 242. Laurillard et al. (2000, 2) note that "narrative provides a macro-structure, which creates global coherence, contributes to local coherence and aids recall through its network of causal links and signposting."
82 See, for example, Futo Kennedy's discussion of the different stages of her research on migrant women in Athens and in the broader Mediterranean world: https://peoplingthepast.com/2020/11/12/video-7-rebecca-futo-kennedy/
83 Excellent examples include the experimental archaeological work of Horowitz (https://peoplingthepast.com/2020/09/23/video_2/) and Arbuckle MacLeod (https://peoplingthepast.com/2020/10/14/video-4-caroline-arbuckle-macleod/) in testing ancient potting and woodworking techniques.
84 See supra nos. 23, 47–49.
85 Kang et al. 2011, 228; Kim 2008, 1342–352.
86 Kang et al. 2011, 229; Hsu and Wang 2010, 70.
87 https://peoplingthepast.com/2021/02/26/blog-post-16-forgotten-kingdom-the-mitanni-with-mara-horowitz/
88 https://peoplingthepast.com/2021/01/15/mountain-peoples-of-the-zagros/
89 https://peoplingthepast.com/?s=graduate+student+features
90 For example, see blog posts from the Halloween series from October 2022, which featured a variety of researchers who study human relationships with the dead (Blog Posts #65–68).
91 Fink 2003b, 32.
92 https://peoplingthepast.com/2021/03/26/blog-post-20-searching-for-sailors-daily-lives-in-antiquity-with-anja-krieger/
93 https://peoplingthepast.com/2021/03/26/blog-post-20-searching-for-sailors-daily-lives-in-antiquity-with-anja-krieger/ .
94 Krieger's post complements Radloff's Peopling the Past podcast interview (https://peoplingthepast.com/2020/11/24/podcast_11/) on the creation of ancient "seascapes" and the sensory experience of the sea in Mediterranean antiquity, which can be used in combination as part of a multimodal teaching module.
95 hooks 2003, 43.
96 Atalay (2008, 43) argues that "producing and reproducing history can be an act of resistance, a reworking of the master narrative of the past." As an example of this type of work on Mediterranean history, see the Pharos project (https://pharos.vassarspaces.net/). See also Gonzalez et al. this volume, for the public-facing educational components of the Antioch Recovery Project.
97 Atalay 2006, 292. See also Colwell-Chanthaphonh et al. 2010, 228–38.
98 Eccleston and Padilla Peralta 2022, 207. "Hexis" means "state" or "way of being."
99 Cook-Sather 2006, 23. The potential liberatory role of education through the development of a critical awareness of institutions of power and the inequities they create

was famously outlined by Freire (1970) in his landmark publication *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire contrasts this type of critical education with the pseudoneutrality of neoliberal educational practices; see Freire 1970, 46–47.

100 Johnston and Gardner 2024

101 Surface-Evans 2020, 77. Singh Dhindsa (2020, 5) highlights the important distinction between "diversity and decolonisation," as "decolonisation is not white people telling the stories of BAME, it's about giving us a platform for our own stories."

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7

BACK TO BASICS

Illuminating the Hidden Curriculum and BIPOC Scholars to Promote a More Diverse and Equitable Field

Nadhira Hill

Introduction

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement began as a response to the murder of Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman in 2013.[1] In summer 2020, BLM drew much attention as the world witnessed a series of murders of Black men, women, and children.[2] It was only then that academics truly began to take the concerns of Black people regarding their experiences with everyday racism to heart. In 2020, many departments and professional organisations developed diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) statements out of an awareness of the "exclusionary history … and elitist attitudes" in the field of Classics.[3] Their protracted and unprecedented attention to these events was amplified by an increasingly online world in the early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic, where social media served as a platform for "grassroots social movements and political organizing."[4]

Although well intentioned, the DEI initiatives – including statements of solidarity – that were newly implemented by departments and institutions proved to be largely performative and, therefore, short-lived. Viewed through the lens of critical race theory (CRT), a cross-disciplinary analysis centred on the idea that race is socially constructed and deeply embedded in all aspects of society, their general lack of long-term success can be attributed to several factors, including a lack of accountability and the failure to address systemic issues, particularly by refusing to accept that improved diversity requires organisational change. These will be discussed in more detail below.

Considering these largely failed attempts to implement long-lasting DEI initiatives and my own positionality as a Black woman in academia, I sought to make a more meaningful and tangible contribution to promoting diversity and inclusion in Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies.[5] Although I have had incredible

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mentors and support systems throughout my academic career, I have found institutional support to be lacking. To lend support to others who may be in my position, I started a blog called *Notes from the Apotheke* – hosted on Wordpress – in December 2020. In this chapter, I highlight two series on my blog: the hidden curriculum series and the profile series, the latter of which features the work of scholars who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC). Through these series on the blog, I challenge the idea that antiquity belongs to a White majority by confronting traditional power structures and applying the first tenet of critical race theory – that is, counter-storytelling – to offer a new, more inclusive perspective on the field. In addition to relating my own experiences, the aim of the blog is to make academia more accessible by giving voice to marginalised groups. Both of the series highlighted in this chapter are informed by the work of critical race theorists, so I must begin with a discussion of critical race theory and how it relates to the field of Ancient Mediterranean Studies.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory developed in the mid-1970s when legal scholars, including Derrick Bell,[6] Kimberlé Crenshaw,[7] Richard Delgado,[8] and Cheryl Harris,[9] began responding to the failure of critical legal studies (CLS) to adequately examine the role of U.S. law in perpetuating racism.[10] The early discussions between minority scholars occurred in "backdoor speakeasies" at annual meetings of the American Association of Law Schools (AALS) and Critical Legal Studies (CLS) and were informed by their "struggles within liberal environments like law schools."[11] Critical race theory thus developed at the intersection of antidiscrimination and Critical Legal Theory. A central notion of this new theoretical framework was "the idea that power structures must shift and change to create more equitable environments within society as a whole."[12] Five major tenets of CRT emerged: counter-storytelling, permanence of racism, whiteness as property, interest convergence, and critique of liberalism.

Counter-storytelling, or counter-narrative, is an essential component of CRT, and involves giving voice to marginalised groups, rather than privileging and perpetuating dominant White narratives and perspectives. At times, there may be pushback from centring the voices of individuals from marginalised groups because "points of view that deviate from the White, male, upper-class, cisgendered standard are seen as coming from a special interest perspective, and the objectivity is suspect."[13] These critiques are grounded in the notion that knowledge is completely objective and neutral; however, this is never the case. As DeCuir and Dixson explain, counter-storytelling is "a means of exposing and critiquing normalized dialogues that perpetuate racial stereotypes."[14]

Derrick Bell is commonly cited in discussions of the permanence of racism – the second tenet of CRT.[15] Bell argues that racism is a foundational and enduring component of American life; it is not an aberration or an antiquated holdover from

slavery, but "part of what shapes and energizes the democratic body."[16] It is ordinary, "the everyday experience of most people of color" in the United States.[17] This suggests that racism is deeply embedded and plays a dominant role in all political, economic, and social contexts. Therefore, it cannot be completely eradicated from society without a fundamental and systematic transformation of society itself.

Whiteness as property – the third tenet of CRT – was first formally articulated by Cheryl I. Harris. In a 1993 article, Harris "reflects on how rights in property are contingent on, intertwined with, and conflated with race."[18] Both whiteness and property, she argues, share a right to exclude; therefore, whiteness as property refers to a sense of entitlement to both public and private societal benefits. In the context of education, "access to a high quality, rigorous curriculum has been almost exclusively enjoyed by White students."[19] This idea is reinforced by a US census taken in 2017, which revealed that, at that time, 66.1% of undergraduate and graduate students were non-Hispanic white.[20] Hispanic, Black, and Asian students made up 20.9%, 15.1%, and 7.6% of undergraduate students, respectively.[21]

The fourth tenet of CRT – interest convergence – describes social change for marginalised groups that only occurs when their interests align with those of the White majority.[22] Bell addresses this in his seminal work *Faces at the Bottom of the Well*, arguing that nondiscriminatory practices towards Black people only occur "when whites perceive that it will be beneficial or at least cost-free to serve, hire, admit, or otherwise deal with" them.[23] In academia, interest convergence can be seen in attempts to increase visible diversity in predominantly White institutions (PWIs) through recruitment. As Hiraldo notes, such recruitment efforts tend to benefit the institutions both financially and in making the campus more "cultured" as a result.[24] By contrast, students who are in the non-majority at PWIs "struggle with psychological adjustments more than their White counterparts" and express "less of a sense of belonging."[25]

Such recruitment efforts are often tied to affirmative action policies, which fall under the final tenet of critical race theory: critique of liberalism. Central to this tenet are critiques of "liberal jurisprudence" by CRT legal scholars, including not only affirmative action,[26] but also colour-blindness[27] and meritocracy.[28] In a 2011 article, Kimberlé Crenshaw discusses in detail the plight of students of colour at Harvard's law school in the early 1980s, following Derrick Bell's departure. Although the students petitioned for the school to hire faculty of colour to teach courses that aligned with their scholarly interests – and had already implemented initiatives to bring in more diverse students – "the School drew a line in the sand when it came to faculty, maintaining a firm commitment to 'merit.'"[29] However, the idea that power and privilege are allocated based on individual merit, rather than social origin, is a myth. This is because power and privilege are disproportionately bestowed based on factors such as income, race, and gender rather than allocated due to hard work and effort. Crenshaw notes in her treatise introducing the concept of intersectionality that, "although racism and sexism readily intersect in the lives of real people, they seldom do in feminist and antiracist practices."[30] In

a 2022 article, Blell et al. show how intersectionality can also be a useful framework for interrogating the power structures underpinning the myth of meritocracy.

Since critical race theory was formally introduced into higher education in the 1990s,[31] several scholars have used this framework to interrogate various topics across Ancient Mediterranean Studies.[32] In this field and its related disciplines, the tenet of whiteness of property can be seen in the frequent appropriation of Greek and Roman antiquity by white supremacist groups.[33] In 2020, Donald Trump's drafted Executive Order "Making Federal Buildings Beautiful Again" further encompassed this appropriative relationship between the alt-right and Greco-Roman antiquity. This is because, as Lyra Monteiro observed, "the originator of the idea that Classical architectural styles were the most appropriate for the United States is the same person who many regard as the founder of American racial science and of American white supremacy" – notably, Thomas Jefferson.[34] Campaigns to promote Greco-Roman antiquity as the pinnacle of art and civilisation, along with the celebration of pristine white ancient sculpture by eighteenth-century art historians like Johann Joachim Winckelmann, and capped off by the overwhelming homogeneity of the discipline, together exacerbate the perception that Classics belongs exclusively to White people. The "myth of Western Civilization" posits that we in the modern West share a common history, heritage, and identity originating in classical Greece and Rome.[35] This view is too simplistic as, among other things, Greece and Rome were much more complex and diverse than the myth of Western Civilisation suggests.

The proprietary relationship between higher education and race is not an issue that is exclusive to Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies. Professional organisations, colleges, and universities "benefit financially from bringing international diversity to their institutions"; this is a clear example of interest convergence in higher education.[36] Moreover, initiatives like affirmative action, specifically within colleges and universities, have focused disproportionally on the benefits that introducing students of colour into academic institutions would have for White students. On June 29, 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down affirmative action on the basis that it was "unconstitutional" and a form of discrimination against White students.[37] Once the policy was perceived to no longer serve the self-interests of the White majority, it was eliminated.

Before the Blog: Demographics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies Prior to 2020

Demographic surveys of professional organisations in Ancient Mediterranean Studies (and its related fields) suggest that previous long-recognised, informal observations that the discipline is overwhelmingly white are not far off the mark.[38] Such surveys have been conducted by the Society for American Archaeology (SAA),[39] the Society for Classical Studies (SCS) and, most recently, the Classical Association of Atlantic States (CAAS).

In a 2018 SCS Survey, membership was invited to answer questions about "harassment and discrimination in online and in-person academic and professional settings, focusing on incidents related to gender, sexuality, and/or race/ethnicity."[40] The demographic data collected included respondents' current professional role or position in the field of Classics, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and race. Of the 874 responses, 93.8% identified as White (Caucasian), 2.5% as Asian, 0.9% as Black or African American, and less than 1% as American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander.

This data, followed by the high-profile murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and many others in 2020, threw into sharp relief the lack of support for marginalised groups, both in the world at-large and in academia more specifically. That year, scholars in Ancient Mediterranean Studies took a variety of actions aimed at making the field more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. Among the actions taken by members, departments, and institutions in the field were public statements of solidarity, the forming of diversity committees, and the facilitation of broader conversations about race and racism in the field.

BIPOC in Ancient Mediterranean Studies have generally had mixed reactions to solidarity statements. On the surface, the "statement of solidarity" is significant because it publicly expresses support for marginalised groups on behalf of a programme, department, or institution. Occasionally, such statements also "clearly and comprehensively articulate why an organization is devoting time, effort, and resources to a diversity initiative."[41] In some instances, this is where diversity initiatives began and ended in 2020. These events and workshops were just as empty and performative as any other.

In other instances, DEI work was supplemented by additional public-facing initiatives, including forming new or empowering existing diversity committees so that they could take action to make lasting change. For example, the Archaeological Institute of America's DEI committee was encouraged and supported by institutional leadership to organise a series of webinars called "Critical Conversations on Race, Teaching, and Antiquity."[42] I served as a panelist with Kara Cooney on the first webinar in the series, entitled "Decolonizing Syllabi in the Archaeology and History of the Mediterranean." In 2022, I was invited by the Women's Classical Caucus (WCC) to organise and facilitate a Zoom roundtable of archaeologists of colour.[43] These virtual discussions – and others like them – were less performative and more meaningful than a simple diversity statement because they provided actionable steps to take to make our classrooms, departments, and the broader field more inclusive and antiracist.

Formal academic discussions like these, in the form of panels, roundtables, and workshops, centred on topics relating to DEI in Ancient Mediterranean Studies have continued since 2020, both online and in-person, and have been hosted by individuals, departments, and professional organisations alike. Some of the most enduring events include *Res Difficiles: A Conference on Challenges and Pathways for Addressing Inequity in Classics,* which, in 2024, convened its fifth annual

meeting.[44] Often, however, such discussions are still the only form of social justice activism taking place within a department or organisation, likely on account of a lack of interest convergence between what BIPOC need and what the White majority wants. There also may be deeper systemic problems, such as a lack of resources and support, which play a role in keeping diversity committees from implementing "strategies that will help to absolve issues surrounding diversity."[45]

Therein lies the major problem with diversity initiatives: they develop out of a concern with the public image of the organisation, rather than with an eye towards enacting meaningful change. If the latter was their goal, organisations would not hesitate to provide adequate tools to those who are charged with implementing diversity initiatives. The reality is that such initiatives, and the individuals and committees that organise them, are woefully under-supported. For example, the Classical Studies department at the University of Michigan established a paid DEI position for graduate students in 2021. According to their website, that position was filled only once, in Winter 2021.[46] The creation of such a position reveals what is frequently the true, underlying goal of such institutions and organisations: a superficial desire to change hearts and minds and leave the "real" work up to individuals. Therefore, such actions do not address deeper and more systemic issues of discrimination and marginalisation; according to Metzler, this is one of the ten reasons diversity initiatives fail.[47] The result of such initiatives is that they "lull the dominant White culture into thinking they are addressing the problem, thus, allowing the deeply rooted systemic racism to invisibly persist."[48]

One of the first things I did to help make more tangible and lasting changes in the field of Ancient Mediterranean Studies was collaborate with graduate students from several US institutions, namely Dora Gao (Michigan), Sam Ross (Michigan), and Zoé Elise Thomas (University of Texas at Austin), to create and maintain a living Google document called "Black-Centered Resources for Ancient Mediterranean Studies."[49] We first promoted the document on Twitter in Summer 2020; since then it has been shared widely and linked on the website of the Society for Classical Studies.[50] The document was created "to address our role within the perpetuation of the myth of Western Civilization and engage in Black theory and scholarship to make our discipline more diverse." In addition, it is meant to promote Black voices within our field and the academy, and to serve as a resource to diversify our course syllabi.

As a result of these initiatives, it seemed, at first, that there was great momentum behind creating a more welcoming environment for BIPOC in Ancient Mediterranean Studies and the data from a 2021 CAAS Demographic Survey suggested an increase in demographic representation for marginalised groups.[51] In the survey, respondents were asked to identify various aspects of their identity, including ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, as well as to estimate the demographics of their classrooms, of their home institutions, and of CAAS. Regarding ethnicity, of the 186 respondents, 76.34% identified as White (non-Hispanic), while roughly 11% identified as Black, African American, or African

diaspora; Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin; Asian; and American Indian or Alaska Native. Despite the clear demographic and regional differences in the respondents to the demographic surveys conducted by the SAA, SCS, and CAAS, overall, this represents a marginal increase in the representation of BIPOC in Ancient Mediterranean Studies.

The degree to which the efforts of scholars in Ancient Mediterranean Studies played a role in this increased diversity in our field is unclear, but I believe such individuals are disproportionately responsible for this change – since few departments and institutions did much more than release public DEI statements. Seeing this unfold, I was both disappointed and frustrated, and began to think of ways that I, as an individual, could make a *real* difference in our discipline.

Notes from the Apotheke

Notes from the Apotheke was launched in 2020 and was initially conceived of as a platform for supporting and amplifying the work of BIPOC in Ancient Mediterranean Studies. The name of the blog originates from my research on ancient ceramics: an "apotheke" (ἀποθήκη; apothḗkē) is the Greek term for a storage room or warehouse, and many archaeological projects in Greece use this term to refer to the room or building that is used for storing archaeological materials and tools. Despite the change in focus, the blog continues to serve as an "apotheke" for the BIPOC perspective in Ancient Mediterranean Studies.

The task of determining whether I had an audience – notably, scholars from historically underrepresented groups – for this blog was not a straightforward one. Although my intended audience comprised scholars from historically underrepresented backgrounds, my actual audience is more wide-reaching. The results of a poll circulated in early 2023 revealed that, of 13 respondents, 91.7% identified as White; this, however, is likely a reflection of the underrepresentation of BIPOC in Ancient Mediterranean Studies (see previous section) and the small number of respondents. Since starting the blog, I have shared my own experiences as a Black woman in the field and I also provide support to scholars who need guidance on navigating various aspects of academia, including how to ask for recommendation letters, how to apply for funding, how to write dissertation chapters, and advice for applying to and interviewing at graduate programmes. Comments on Twitter illustrated that undergraduate and graduate students have been appreciative of the resource.[52] Faculty members have also found the site useful and have shared various blog posts with their own students.[53]

In the discussion that follows, I highlight two recurrent features on the blog – the hidden curriculum series and the BIPOC feature series – and how they are informed by critical race theory. I discuss these series because they have been the most impactful in terms of readership, and because they align with two of the tenets of CRT discussed above (whiteness as property and counter-storytelling). This alignment is important because it has helped me make Ancient Mediterranean

Studies more accessible and allow scholars of colour to take ownership of a field from which they have historically been excluded.

The Hidden Curriculum Series

The hidden curriculum series was inspired by a talk given by Dr Amy Pistone in a workshop on "COVID-19 and the Future of Classics Graduate Study" at the online joint AIA/SCS Annual Meeting in January 2021. In her talk, she offered advice to graduate students and recent PhDs going on the job market and just starting their careers as professors. She addressed skills that we, as academics, often develop and deploy without thinking about it, including networking, writing abstracts, delivering papers, writing emails, and dressing for conferences.[54] What was missing from her talk was an acknowledgement of the many issues facing undergraduate and graduate students before they begin looking towards professional careers in the field, like searching and applying for funding and the dissertation process.

On my blog, I frequently discuss topics like these that were lacking in my academic training, which make up a series of posts on the "hidden curriculum."[55] In general, the hidden curriculum is defined as "the unspoken or implicit values, behaviors, and norms that exist in the educational setting."[56] These social and academic norms are learned primarily through relationships, such as having friends, siblings, or parents who went to college or who teach in academic settings. However, the existence of such relationships tends to be biased against students from marginalised backgrounds. Neither of my parents are academics. Therefore, like many individuals from marginalised backgrounds, I learned everything I know about navigating academia from my peers, from my mentors and professors, and from good old-fashioned trial and error.

Viewed through the lens of critical race theory, the hidden curriculum is a good example of how the tenet "whiteness as property" operates in academia. As Ash et al. explains, "on college and university campuses, dominant group members are granted unearned privileges based upon the perception that membership belongs to those who possess certain characteristics and values related to that particular social group."[57] This includes, as both Crenshaw and Hiraldo have discussed, disparities in hiring practices in higher education.[58] Although this may, at times, be blamed on an assumed "pool problem" – the belief that there simply are not enough qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds – it is more likely to stem from a belief that "being White is more valuable and important than being a person of color."[59]

As mentioned above, the Supreme Court decreed in 2023 that race could no longer be taken into consideration in college admissions decisions.[60] The majority opinion that served as a driving factor in this decision was that affirmative action – meant to level the playing field for students from historically excluded backgrounds – was unfairly biased against White students. It follows, then, that many people assume that knowledge within academia belongs to White people, because

they have historically had more access to academic spaces than people of colour and first-generation students. The lack of access to higher education by these latter underrepresented groups over several generations has led to a consequent lack of preparation for inhabiting and thriving in such spaces. Therefore, like Dr Pistone's talk, the main goals of my blog's hidden curriculum series were to promote transparency and to make the implicit social norms and values of academia explicit. In other words, the hidden curriculum series aims to make academia more accessible to historically excluded groups.

The first hidden curriculum post I wrote focused on funding applications (especially ones for scholarships and fellowships).[61] I felt that, although more funding sources supporting historically underrepresented groups were being created, they were inadequately advertised at the time. I frequently only heard about these resources by word of mouth. Formal calls for applications were rarely circulated, and when they were it was only via specific email listservs.[62] As I explain in the "Funding Guide for BIPOC" post, I did not know that funding existed specifically for BIPOC students until I got to graduate school.[63] I lacked this knowledge even though I could have benefited significantly from such funding earlier in my academic career, as I grappled with paying for archaeological fieldwork and summer Latin courses in preparation for graduate school. The funding guide and related posts on funding applications were created because I did not want those funding opportunities to pass anyone else by.[64]

Thus, my inspiration for hidden curriculum blog posts is mainly from two sources. First, when I was a graduate student, they came from my own day-to-day frustrations with funding applications, writing dissertation chapters, and giving presentations about my research.[65] Similar roadblocks in my current role as a newly hired tenure-track professor continue to drive my posts on the blog. My second source of inspiration came from complaints – such as those regarding email etiquette – by faculty members about their students on Twitter. Internet conversations, such as these, help me see what issues are more pressing than others and which concerns have gained more traction, popularity, or scrutiny. These resources have helped me achieve this first important step – demystifying the hidden curriculum – in levelling the academic playing field for all members of the field of Ancient Mediterranean Studies. The second step involved giving voice to individuals who have been historically excluded from the field through the BIPOC feature series.

BIPOC Feature Series

A driving force behind starting the BIPOC Feature series (and the blog as a whole), was my curiosity about how many BIPOC there were studying the ancient world. Although demographic data about the field of Ancient Mediterranean Studies exists (as discussed above), much of this information is outdated (e.g., the SAA survey from 1997 and the SCS Harassment Survey from 2018) or is not yet publicly available (e.g., the CAAS Demographic Survey from 2021).

While understanding representation is crucial for potential change, it has been argued that representation alone cannot solve white supremacist culture and systems because "it obscures the enduring need for real change while offering a false sense of relief."[66] Indeed, some forms of representation are problematic. In addition to perpetuating harm through "tokenization, generalization, appropriation, and erasure,"[67] initiatives targeting underrepresentation in academia largely favour Black men and White women, leaving Black women disproportionately underrepresented in academic spaces.[68] When Black women are present, they frequently lack the resources and support afforded to their White and male counterparts. Preconceived notions and stereotypes about Black women's temperaments, the way we speak, and the way we look remain significant barriers to our success in academia.[69] However, when we allow Black women – and BIPOC in general – to share their stories in their own words, they can "contradict the Othering process, and, thus, challenge the privileged discourses that are often found" in elite, predominantly white institutions.[70] Moreover, involving BIPOC as "active stakeholders in deciding how to support their academic careers within the academic system would promote transparency and trust in the process."[71] Therefore, diversity initiatives cannot rely on representation alone, but will succeed only by acknowledging and accounting for the personal narratives of BIPOC.

Creating space for BIPOC scholars in Ancient Mediterranean Studies by increasing representation matters for at least two reasons. The first relates to the perception that Greek and Roman antiquity "belongs" to the White majority, which is most apparent in the appropriation of the ancient world by alt-right groups.[72] This view persists despite the DEI initiatives that have been introduced with varying degrees of success over the last four years. In his 2003 article, Metzler argued that, when rolling out new diversity initiatives through public statements, an organisation must "clearly explain to key audiences why now and what is in it for them," as well as "the importance of diversity to the organization"; he also stressed that this is only one step in a much more complex process.[73] To create space for BIPOC scholars in Ancient Mediterranean Studies, organisations must view diversity as synonymous with organisational change, must address systemic issues, must engage White men, and must be held accountable.

The second reason that it is important to create space for BIPOC scholars is more personal: in the early days of my academic career as an undergraduate student, I was frequently the only Black person in my Classics courses. This reality persisted for me even in graduate school. I cannot remember ever having a person of colour teach me in subjects pertaining to the ancient Mediterranean world – which is unsurprising, since only 7% of all faculty members at four-year, postsecondary institutions are Black.[74] I also did not see anyone who looked like me represented in the material that we covered or in the scholars whose work we were assigned to read. It was not until recently, when I started seeing other BIPOC talking about their experiences online, that I noticed how alienating it was to be a person of colour in this field. As Ane Ogbe observes, "social media platforms

have highlighted the negative experience" of many people of colour in academia, especially Black women.[75]

Clearly, I persisted despite all this. But I always wonder: what it would be like for a student of colour to see someone who looks like them doing what they want to do? How validating would that be? That is why, despite becoming severely disillusioned with the field in early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, I ultimately decided that becoming a professor was the right path for me and aligned with my values. It is also why I started – and will continue – the BIPOC feature series on my blog.

In the spirit of counter-storytelling, the posts in the BIPOC feature series are written by the guests themselves and focus on their academic journey, their current work, and their hopes for the future of the field. The series highlights scholars from a wide range of academic stages, including students and faculty. The array of academic backgrounds was essential because I wanted the series to be appealing and useful to people from all levels of academia. By featuring early career scholars and full-time faculty, I show students what is possible within academia, and by including independent scholars, readers can see what is possible beyond the academy.

The research interests of the featured scholars are even more varied than the contributors' professional affiliations and roles. These research topics range from epistemology, metaphysics, representations of Africans in Greek vase painting, ancient gender politics, and questions about how Classics can benefit the public. Showcasing such broad research interests was important because it reveals that BIPOC scholars can contribute to all subdisciplines within Ancient Mediterranean Studies, not just those concerned with race and ethnicity. I have experienced this preconceived notion first-hand, having been invited to give talks on race in antiquity and on African-American burials in North America, neither of which, as a specialist on Greek ceramics and drinking practices, are topics that I research. Our academic interests may frequently be tied to our heritage or our lived experiences, but not always. Diversifying the people who study the ancient world is just as important as highlighting the experiences of diverse peoples in antiquity. This is because such diversity promotes a broader range of perspectives and interpretations that can be applied to ancient literature, history, and material culture. *Notes from the Apotheke's* BIPOC feature series demonstrates that antiquity belongs to marginalised groups just as much as it has been assumed to belong to the White majority.

The two major goals that underscore all the BIPOC posts are broadening the boundaries of the discipline to include those who have historically been excluded or devalued, and engaging in more interdisciplinarity. A major theme that has emerged from the posts by the guest authors is how irresponsible it is to recruit scholars of colour into environments that are unwelcoming and uninhabitable, namely the ivory tower of academia and departments related to the study of the ancient Mediterranean world. We must "be very intentional in creating an

ecosystem in which emerging leaders' identities are recognized and celebrated," and start this process in the early stages of postsecondary education.[76] Even one negative environment along the way could be enough to drive promising young scholars of colour out of the field before they get a chance to make it into graduate programmes and faculty positions. The BIPOC feature series on my blog helps others avoid this fate by offering transparency about the experiences of BIPOC scholars in the field, so that new recruits have an idea of what to expect and what they might experience. However, at just thirteen features to date, I know that I have hardly scratched the surface.[77]

Future of the Blog

As I transition from graduate student to faculty member, I often think about what the blog will look like as I take on my new role and what practical applications it might have, including how I plan to incorporate it into my classroom so that more undergraduate students are exposed to these perspectives. An obvious application of the BIPOC series is to feature more of these scholars of colour in my courses, as compensated guest lecturers and as authors of assigned readings in my syllabi. In the latter case, I am a big proponent of making sure that we put faces with names in our lectures – we do it with Arthur Evans and Heinrich Schliemann and other "Infamous White Men Who Did Things in the Fields of Classics and Archaeology," why not with Sanchita Balachandran (Associate Director, Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum) or Shelley Haley (Professor, Hamilton College)? In addition to its uses in the classroom, the BIPOC feature series will serve more broadly as a resource for identifying potential guest speakers in academic departments and professional organisations.

As a second real-world application of my blog, I plan to make the hidden curriculum series more available to my students by bringing these resources into my classroom and through mentorship strategies. Is there something that students are frequently asking me about? Is there anything that they are struggling with? I want to eliminate some of the frustration experienced by BIPOC students attempting to navigate the academy by providing them with resources to help them succeed, such as the funding guide and funding application checklist on my blog.[78] Ultimately, it is not enough for postsecondary institutions to offer superficial support for historically underrepresented groups; both BIPOC and White mentors of BIPOC and other marginalised students must be intentional about sharing those resources with our students and helping them identify where to look.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted several attempts to make the field of Ancient Mediterranean Studies more diverse, equitable, and inclusive over the last several

years. I use the word "attempts" because not all these initiatives have been successful – indeed, especially in Summer 2020, most were performative and did not lead to tangible change for BIPOC scholars. By starting a blog with two series – the hidden curriculum series and the BIPOC feature series – informed by the tenets of critical race theory, I aimed to make more meaningful and lasting change for scholars in the field who, like me, come from historically underrepresented backgrounds.

As I discussed above, *Notes from the Apotheke* was initially intended to be a resource for BIPOC in Ancient Mediterranean Studies. However, the demographic data from my own polls, as well as from surveys conducted by the SAA, the SCS, and CAAS, has made it clear that my audience is much more traditional than I expected. Nonetheless, in the spirit of counter-storytelling, one of the tenets of CRT, I continue to highlight the work and experiences of BIPOC in the field, empowering them to share their stories in their own words, just as I myself have done in other ways on the blog. I also invite those in the BIPOC feature series to be involved as active stakeholders in deciding how they want to be supported, by asking them to briefly address something that they would change about the field at the end of their posts.

The second way that I have sought to make meaningful and lasting change for BIPOC in Classics and adjacent fields is by challenging the idea that academia, and Greco-Roman antiquity more specifically, are the property of the White majority. I have done this on my blog by implementing the hidden curriculum series, which promotes greater transparency about things that we, as students, faculty, and independent scholars, are expected to know but are never formally taught. As I discussed above, this series has had great success – not only have these posts been viewed more than 2,600 times in the past three years, but I am told that several faculty members have shared my posts with their students.

I remember in the early months of the blog, I would often receive messages asking, "How do you do it all?" To be honest, I don't know how I both contributed to and managed external contributions to the blog while finishing a dissertation and a doctoral degree, or how I continue to do so as a new faculty member and early career scholar. I largely credit my continued excitement around writing new blog posts to my wonderful, loyal readers; they make this project worth it. I do not know what the future holds in terms of balancing *Notes at the Apotheke* and the demands of a tenure-track job. I hope that my work will still be as helpful as it has been since its inception in 2020. At the very least, I will continue to be a resource for students, both within my home institution and in the broader field, by amplifying BIPOC in Ancient Mediterranean Studies however I can, while maintaining the forum that allows me to commiserate with other early career scholars as I embark on this new chapter of my life and academic career.

Notes

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2 Daniels 2023.
3 See, e.g., University of Pittsburgh; Archaeological Institute of America 2020a.
4 Raffio 2022.
5 I use the term "Ancient Mediterranean Studies" throughout this article instead of "Classics" (traditionally the study of Greco-Roman antiquity) to be more inclusive of the breadth of regions, chronological periods, and subdisciplines (philology, history, art history, and archaeology) encompassed by the field.
6 Bell 1992.
7 Crenshaw 1989, 1991, 2006, and 2011.
8 Delgado and Stefancic 2001.
9 Harris 2001.
10 CLS is a theoretical framework that interrogates how laws and the legal system in the United States in general are inherently biased against marginalised groups.
11 Crenshaw 2011, 1263–264.
12 Ash et al. 2020, 8.
13 Sterling 2015, 99.
14 DeCuir and Dixson 2004, 27.
15 DeCuir and Dixson 2004, 27; Ash et al. 2020, 5.
16 Bell 1992, 10.
17 Delgado and Stefancic 2001, 8.
18 Harris 1993, 1714.
19 DeCuir and Dixson 2004, 28.
20 United States Census Bureau 2018a.
21 United States Census Bureau 2018a; see also United States Census Bureau 2018b, table 5.
22 As Delgado and Stefancic (2001, 9) further explain, "because racism advances the interests of both white elites and working-class people, large segments of society have little incentive to eradicate it." Therefore, this is another contributing factor to the permanence of racism in the United States.
23 Bell 1992, 7.
24 Hiraldo 2010, 56.
25 Campbell-Whatley et al. 2021, 254; see also Winkle-Wagner and McCoy 2018; and Smith et al. 2014.
26 E.g., Crenshaw 2006.
27 E.g., Bonilla-Silva 2003.
28 The term was originally popularised by Young 1958.
29 Crenshaw 2011, 1269.
30 Crenshaw 1991, 1242.
31 See Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995, 47–68.
32 Haley 2009, 27–50; Samuels 2015, 723–41; Giusti 2020.
33 E.g., Morse 2018; Zuckerberg 2018; Illing 2019. See also Funke et al., this volume.
34 Montiero 2020.
35 Most recently, the "myth of Western Civilization" has been challenged by MacSweeney 2023.
36 Hiraldo 2010, 56.

37 Debusman Jr. 2023. Crenshaw had already acknowledged the vulnerability of affirmative action in the early 2000s, stating that "[a]t the Court level, affirmative action is set up as a preference by undercutting the relevance of the very inequalities that affirmative action is meant to correct … It is into this very arena of disadvantage and discrimination that the Court delivers affirmative action, permitting the majority to kill these policies while retaining preferences that channel opportunities to recipients they prefer" (Crenshaw 2006, 124).
38 See, for example, Blouin (2017) and Bostick (2021).
39 Franklin 1997, 799–801.
40 Society of Classical Studies 2018, 2.
41 Metzler 2003, 19.
42 Archaeological Institute of America 2020b.
43 The main takeaways of that roundtable were summarised here: Hill 2023a, 25–35.
44 Another prolific series that should be mentioned are the events hosted by the Women's Classical Caucus in 2020 and 2021.
45 Ash et al. 2020, 12–14.
46 In 2023, the Classical Studies department became engaged in a five-year, university-wide DEI initiative, which focuses more on "organizational change" and "self-evaluation."
47 Metzler 2003.
48 Ash et al. 2020, 5. See also Johnston et al., this volume.
49 Gao et al. 2020.
50 Society for Classical Studies 2021.
51 The results of this survey have not yet been made publicly available.
52 E.g., "Just came across 'Notes from the Apotheke' blog, a great resource for Classics (and classics-adjacent) grad students. The Ultimate Checklist for Funding Applications is terrific, @ApothekeBlog!" from @ByzCapp on Twitter, Jan. 3, 2022; and "Thank you again for having me and for all that you do with this blog! I'm thrilled that a resource as important and helpful as this is available to POC in the field." Posted by @agoranomos on Twitter, Jun. 24, 2021.
53 E.g., "@ApothekeBlog leading the way yet again. Will use this as a way to share this information with my own students about how to ask for recommendations! Thank you!" by @Sanchita_writes on Twitter, Feb. 18, 2021; and "I love when I have the opportunity to recommend @ApothekeBlog to my students. It's a really amazing resource and I'm grateful for all the work that goes into it." From @debscavator on Twitter, Jul. 30, 2021.
54 Maticic et al. 2021.
55 E.g., Hill 2021a. There have been thirteen posts in the series covering a broad range of topics.
56 Alsubaie 2015, 125. This term was first introduced in Jackson 1968.
57 Ash et al. 2020, 10.
58 For Crenshaw's discussion, see above. See also Hiraldo 2015, 55.
59 Hiraldo 2015, 55.
60 Although the Supreme Court struck down affirmative action in June 2023, it refused to intervene in several legal battles surrounding race-conscious admissions policies in February 2024. These include the cases *Coalition for TJ v. Fairfax County School Board* involving "a high school admissions policy designed to eliminate unfair barriers for students of color" (Cader 2024) and *Students for Fair Admissions v. U.S. Military Academy at West Point*.
61 https://notesfromtheapotheke.com/tips-for-applying-for-funding/
62 For example, in 2020, I was only made aware of the ASCSA's William Sanders Scarborough Fellowship because a colleague on the email list it was posted to forwarded it to me.

63 https://notesfromtheapotheke.com/funding-guide-for-bipoc-students-in-classics/
64 As of December 2024, the "Funding Guide for BIPOC Students in Classics" (Hill 2020) has had 478 views; "Tips for Applying for Funding (Hidden Curriculum #1)" (Hill 2021b) has had 185 views; "The Ultimate Checklist for Funding Applications" (Hill 2022) has had 178 views; and "The Truth about Grad School Funding" (Hill 2023b) has had 267 views.
65 As of December 2024, posts in the hidden curriculum series, including posts relating to funding advice, have been viewed over 2,900 times.
66 Kim 2021, 84.
67 Kim 2021, 84.
68 Ogbe 2022, 679–82; Fox Tree and Vaid 2022.
69 Ogbe 2022, 681.
70 Decuir and Dixson 2004, 27.
71 Ogbe 2022, 681.
72 For a summary of some of these adoptions, see Dozier 2020; Poser 2021.
73 Metzler 2003, 19.
74 National Center for Education Statistics 2022.
75 Ogbe 2022, 680.
76 Ash et al. 2020, 20.
77 I would like to thank every person who has generously taken the time and energy to write these features for the blog: Maia Lee-Chin, Vanessa Stovall, Machal Gradoz, Susan Rahyab, Ashley Lance, Daniel Libatique, Annissa Malvoisin, Dora Gao, Najee Olya, Kiran Mansukhani, Alex-Jaden Peart, Hardeep Singh Dhindsa, and Michaela Smith. Your posts have inspired me so much and I hope that they continue to inspire other future BIPOC studying the ancient world.
78 Hill 2020; 2022.

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8

THE LUX PROJECT

Using Small-Scale Public Scholarship to Reach Local Audiences

Melissa Funke, Colton Van Gerwen, Kira Lang, and Bourke Karras

Introduction

In the spring of 2017, the Lux Project was conceived of at the University of Winnipeg with the goal of making the university's collection of around 400 antiquities from the ancient Mediterranean accessible to scholars beyond our campus, but primarily – and most importantly – to the local public.[1] These antiquities are known as the Hetherington Collection and are held by the university's Anthropology Museum.[2] The two project founders, Melissa Funke (faculty member in the Department of Classics) and Simone Obendoerfer (an alumna of the Curatorial Practices Masters program), set out several goals to maximise the use of the Hetherington Collection beyond the classroom, specifically, to create a database of digital images of the collection, to research the individual items, many of which have insufficient provenance, to learn more about the origins of the Hetherington Collection, and, finally, to undertake local outreach and raise the profile of ancient Mediterranean studies within our local community. It is the final goal that forms the basis of this chapter. Since the project's inception in 2017, our team of undergraduate student researchers – all volunteers with an interest in the ancient Mediterranean who work on the project as an extracurricular activity – have been steadily working away at those goals as we consider the best ways to bring the objects of the Hetherington Collection to Winnipeggers of all ages.[3] Our main outreach activities, thus far, have included working in local primary and secondary schools, visiting retirement homes, and creating learning modules for at-home schooling during the COVID-19 lockdowns.[4] Through all these activities, we have reached hundreds of local elementary school students, dozens of senior citizens, and countless members of our own university community; on a more global scale, groups from as far away as Taiwan have implemented our learning modules.

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In what follows, we explore how undergraduate students can become public scholars through participation in public-facing activities like the Lux Project, and how small-scale projects like ours are ideally positioned to adapt their activities to meet the needs of local communities. We envision this chapter as a case study that can offer a flexible template for others seeking to dip their toes into the waters of public scholarship, particularly those at institutions that may not have access to large pools of funding. We will also consider how undergraduate students can engage with the ethical dimensions of the antiquities trade and the colonial history of Mediterranean archaeology by working with collections such as the Hetherington, and how through recontextualisation, animation, and access, these relics of nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonisation can become a means to provide equitable access to the ancient Mediterranean in the twenty-first century.[5]

Our discussion of the Lux Project and its outreach activities is informed by Kezar, Drivalas, and Kitchen's 2018 exploration of the ever-changing concept of public scholarship. If we take public scholarship to simply mean "scholarship done in public", we must orient that understanding around what scholarship looks like when undertaken outside of the academy and what the goals of reaching out to one's community should be.[6] For Kezar et al., public scholarship should connect communities and scholars with the goal to advance "diverse democracy, equity, and social justice"; this is achieved through actively involving the public in scholarly research as it is crafted, disseminated, and applied.[7] The public is not meant to be understood as an abstract group that includes anyone outside of academia but, rather, specific groups who are "affected and could be empowered" by involvement in scholarship.[8] Mutuality and bidirectional communication are also key to these interactions, as stakeholder groups work collaboratively. Kezar et al. use a continuum to illustrate the forms of mutual engagement that public scholarship can take, with social media promotion at the less mutually engaged end and direct action within home community at the other.[9]

Understanding public scholarship through these three key points (orientation of our project around equitable access to Mediterranean antiquities, identification of specific publics to whom our work applies, and mutuality through work in the community), the following chapter discusses the work of the Lux Project as meaningful public scholarship in which student volunteer interest and skill determine the activities and direction of our work and simultaneously drive public engagement initiatives. While we may often consider faculty and students as one large community of scholars within the context of the university, it is often the case that the work of these two groups is significantly different, with different priorities around knowledge creation and circulation.[10] In what follows, we propose the Lux Project as an example of an intermediary kind of learning community, in which undergraduate students can join in both knowledge creation and its circulation, with guidance from faculty.[11] As participants in a project that takes place in a deeply interconnected city with a diverse set of communities with accordingly diverse needs, we also consider how our form of small-scale public scholarship

can foster connection within local communities and how our student volunteers' own connections to their communities informs our work.

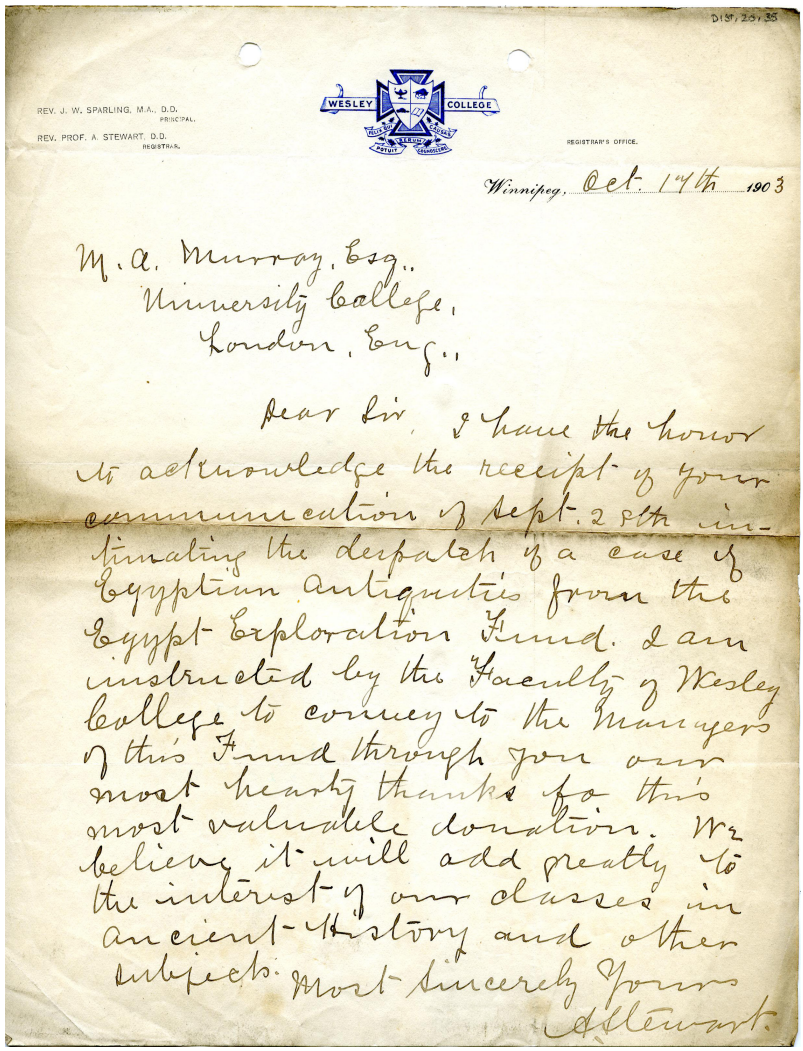
The History of the Hetherington Collection

In order to situate the work of the Lux Project, we must first offer an historical account of the Hetherington Collection and its connection to broader trends within Egyptology and archaeology in the early twentieth century, especially as the collection first came to Winnipeg through mechanisms of colonialism and empire. We cannot ignore, moreover, how such mechanisms continue to influence our own research in the twenty-first century. Examining the history of the collection has proven to be a meaningful way for our student volunteers to reckon with the embedded structures of colonialism in the modern university and our city more broadly.

The origins of the Hetherington Collection stem from a gift of several dozen ancient Egyptian objects to Wesley College (a Methodist college that was a precursor to the University of Winnipeg) from the Egypt Exploration Fund (now known as the Egypt Exploration Society or EES) in 1903 (see Figure 8.1).

The archives of the EES reveal that this gift was one of four similar shipments from that year; the other three went to Victoria College at the University of Toronto, Mount Allison University in New Brunswick, and a Methodist pastor in Vancouver, British Columbia – likely Rev. Wilford J. Sipprell, the Principal of Columbian College at the time.[12] There is no direct connection between the four postsecondary schools, other than the fact that they were all Methodist-run institutions. However, Charles Trick Currelly, the first director of the Royal Ontario Museum and a graduate of Victoria College, had been a Methodist missionary in northwestern Manitoba prior to beginning his archaeological work in Egypt, where he eventually became Flinders Petrie's assistant at the Egypt Exploration Fund in 1902.[13] The items in this initial shipment came from digs led by Petrie himself, Bernard Grenfell, and Édouard Naville, all prominent figures among the many European Egyptologists who made use of the colonial institutions in place in Egypt at that time to practice extractive archaeology.[14] Subsequent contributions to the collection are poorly documented, but we do know that the full Hetherington Collection as we know it now was in place by the 1960s.[15] It is likely that the collection was named after Albert E. Hetherington, the Dean of Divinity at Wesley College in the late 1920s, who travelled to Egypt and Palestine in 1928, where he is thought to have acquired more antiquities for the collection before his premature death later that same year.[16]

The roots of the Lux Project's public scholarship lie in that initial 1903 shipment, since it was itself an early attempt to foster scholarly engagement with the public. Similar shipments of artefacts from the EEF were sent around the world at that time to subscribing groups and institutions in Commonwealth countries and Japan, all of which paid annual fees to the EEF and whose organisers were



DIST. 20, 35

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REGISTRAR.

WESLEY COLLEGE

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE.

Winnipeg, Oct. 17th 1903

M. A. Murray, Esq.,
University College,
London, Eng.,

Dear Sir, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of Sept. 28th intimating the despatch of a case of Egyptian antiquities from the Egypt Exploration Fund. I am instructed by the Faculty of Wesley College to convey to the Managers of this Fund through you our most hearty thanks for this most valuable donation. We believe it will add greatly to the interest of our classes in ancient History and other subjects. Most Sincerely Yours
A. Stewart.

FIGURE 8.1 Letter to the Registrar of Wesley College (1903). Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society.

eager to bring the material culture of ancient Egypt to members of the public. The registrar of Wesley College in 1903, Professor A. Stewart, wrote a letter of thanks to the EEF and remarked that the items in the shipment were sure to generate interest from students at the school.[17] These shipments were a means of drawing the public's attention to the more scientific archaeological work of the EEF and building a network of financial support for such activities. In the case of shipments like the one that arrived in Winnipeg in 1903, objects that were ostensibly meant

to inspire student interest in ancient Egypt also functioned as vectors of imperial power, taken from source communities in Egypt by British archaeologists, then distributed to outposts of the British Empire.[18] The recipients of these objects, who lived in places like the Canadian prairie or the west coast of the country, could use them to claim their own part of the cultural currency that institutions like the British Museum held at the time.[19] Possessing these antiquities allowed those on the imperial frontier to align themselves with the masters of empire in London.

At the same time as the Hetherington Collection was being formed, antiquities could be easily purchased in places like Egypt and Palestine through agents sanctioned by colonial governments or through a flourishing black market.[20] As mentioned above, it is likely that some of the objects in the Hetherington Collection were purchased abroad by faculty during this period (possibly by Hetherington himself). While a small selection of the items in the Hetherington Collection have been well documented since their arrival in Winnipeg, the assembly of the collection in this way over three to four decades with the objects being renumbered and recatalogued on more than one occasion means that provenance for many of them is uncertain and dating those objects relies on careful study of typologies.

In terms of the material itself, the Hetherington Collection comprises a rather eclectic group of artefacts that contains a range of items, including oil lamps, ceramic figurines, and wooden objects from the Mediterranean basin – that is, portable objects for everyday use. The chronological range of these objects, moreover, varies from the Middle Kingdom of ancient Egypt (early second millennium BCE) to the early Islamic period (seventh-century CE), highlighting the diachronic breadth of the objects in the collection. Due to the breadth of its objects and the fact that most of them are not especially unique, the Hetherington Collection is, and has been since its inception, a teaching collection, used regularly in anthropology and archaeology classes at the University of Winnipeg and now the primary focus of the Lux Project.

The Lux Project

Given the diverse population of our local community, which is reflected in the student body here at the University of Winnipeg, the Lux Project is itself necessarily varied in its activities and approaches to our study of the Hetherington Collection.[21] As stated in the introduction, our primary goals include local outreach and raising the profile of Ancient Mediterranean Studies within our own communities, by engaging in a "scholarship in public" approach, centred on the objects of the Hetherington Collection. The student volunteers (ca. twelve per year since 2018) have a keen interest in sharing their love of the ancient world with the broader community; many articulate that their reasoning behind this interest is a wish to make this information accessible to people who have not typically been welcomed into fields such as Egyptology, largely due to factors embedded in systems of colonisation, including racism and highly stratified economic status. At

the University of Winnipeg, we have identified several groups as the constituencies on whom we focus most of our outreach efforts: the broader campus community, elementary school students who are studying the ancient Mediterranean as part of the provincial history curriculum,[22] as well as local retirement communities who invite scholars to join them as part of their enrichment programming.

In the ongoing creation of the public-facing activities of the Lux Project, we are cognizant of Faye Sayer's discussion of the "public" in public history and how the use of that term can suggest a certain homogeneity that denies the "publics" that make up a community.[23] The political implications of who does public scholarship and who is assumed to have ownership of that knowledge must always be considered, especially in a city with ongoing economic and racial divides that shape the educational prospects of children in the public school system. In the case of Winnipeg, the study of the ancient Mediterranean at the secondary and post-secondary levels has historically been dominated by white settlers. Many Winnipeggers' most significant engagement with ancient Greece, Rome, and Egypt is via prominent local architecture that employs classical motifs to advance white supremacist narratives (most notably on the Manitoba Legislative Assembly building).[24] When Mediterranean antiquities are displayed for the public, it is typically in galleries or museums that are not easily accessed by all.[25] Therefore, most of our outreach work (typically two to three school visits per year) has intentionally taken place in schools that are located in low-income neighbourhoods or have large populations of Indigenous students or students who have recently immigrated to Canada. Through hands-on engagement with antiquities, it is our goal to ensure that the students at these schools will understand that the ancient world belongs to them as much as to anyone else.

One might expect repatriation to be part of the conversations we have with student volunteers and the public. In our research, we do address questions of repatriation broadly and we do periodically answer questions from the public about the status of our collection. While the objects in our collection are not of the type typically subject to such claims on the part of the Egyptian government, the type of objects in the collection does not invalidate the colonial nature of the process by which they were extracted from Egypt and sent to the University of Winnipeg. Rather that process compels us to work with the collection that is here with respect and transparency.[26] Working with a teaching collection such as the Hetherington means that student volunteers must engage with larger questions of coloniality in shaping museum collections and how archaeological practices affect source communities, while at the same time thinking about the local history of Winnipeg and its own interactions with empire. Undergraduate volunteers, keenly engaged with matters of social justice, view this work as a small but important way of reckoning with the colonial forces that brought the Hetherington Collection to Winnipeg in the first place. The Lux project is, by design, adaptable to meet the needs and interests of our undergraduate volunteers in our ongoing efforts to seek new means of connecting to our community.

Sayer categorises public history projects as either "grass-roots" (run by non-professionals) or "top-down" (run by professionals);[27] the Lux Project, however, is a combination of both, guided by Dr. Funke, designed and executed by student volunteers, and run with institutional oversight through our consultations with Jodi Schmidt, the Anthropology Museum's technician.[28] The goals of all involved are to centre student volunteer participation and to minimise the need for significant funding.[29] Our outreach activities are almost all either free or very low cost (less than $100), with simple, readily available supplies like quick-dry clay, popsicle sticks, and plastic drink cups.

Every Friday afternoon, student volunteers meet in the anthropology lab with Dr Funke to study and photograph the antiquities of the Hetherington Collection, as well as to make plans for outreach activities (see Figure 8.2). Because we are not working toward a deadline for the online display of our digitisation efforts, this has become a free-flowing space for exploration of the various ways that we can engage with antiquities. For example, on days when artistically-inclined volunteers are present, we may focus on sketching the objects. On other days, when students with more archaeological experience are in the lab, there are student volunteer-run lessons on how to measure objects using calipers and gather Munsell numbers. The intent in this kind of work is to empower the student volunteers in their relationship to antiquity and to create a space in which typical academic hierarchies are not operative. Discussions of student volunteer interests and expertise lead our work as we decide what outreach activities we want to take part in; at the time of writing, the most recent group of volunteers curated a display for the university's student recruitment evening. In doing so, they learned to write engaging object labels (these include personal reflections on why each volunteer finds specific objects from the collection compelling), while also considering how to make exhibits of antiquities accessible to a broader audience. Having a wide variety of outreach activities already in hand allows us to tailor our efforts in response to consultations with the groups with whom we work.[30]

The choices we make around our outreach activities reflect a deliberate attempt to build capacity for student volunteers' future professional endeavours and to foster the necessary skills that they will need to work with groups we have identified as our "publics." For our various outreach activities, student volunteers have led lamp and *shabti*-making activities in elementary and junior high classrooms with groups of 15–30 students,[31] participated in virtual visits to discuss the field of archaeology with grade 3 classes, made worksheets for school children that have been used as far away as Taiwan,[32] presented to senior citizen groups (typically attended by 15–20 individuals), delivered public lectures to groups of up to 40 people, and curated exhibitions that were displayed in central areas of the university. One very special activity has involved a cultural partnership based on the objects in the Hetherington Collection. We have created a display with images and replicas of our Egyptian objects attended by student volunteers for the Egyptian pavilion as part of a local cultural festival (Folklorama), reuniting our objects with

FIGURE 8.2 Student Volunteers Photographing the Hetherington Collection, University of Winnipeg.

their source community and bringing antiquities to hundreds of visitors to the pavilion.[33] In particular, the decision to work with school children and to create learning modules for use during COVID-19 lockdowns was largely shaped by the significant number of undergraduate students majoring in Education who volunteer with the Lux Project and who were eager to find opportunities to combine their pedagogical training with their interest in the ancient world.[34]

Thus, in designing our various outreach activities, student volunteers are encouraged to introduce their own expertise and interests. Simone Obendoerfer was a masters student in a Curatorial Studies program when she co-founded the

Lux Project and used her disciplinary resources to create a display in the central hall of the university. She curated a display in the central building on campus aimed at students who were new to the University of Winnipeg and who might not know about archaeology or anthropology and the courses offered in those disciplines on our campus; this display focused on the lamps from the Hetherington Collection and centred its Egyptian origins. In another example, the worksheets we created at the outset of COVID-19 lockdowns were designed by two student volunteers in the education program, Kira Lang and Kaitlyn Gilfillan, who both had extensive knowledge of the provincial curriculum. The illustrations we used for these worksheets were provided by Caitlin Mostoway-Parker, an alumna of the Classics program and talented visual artist, who has since created several images of the artefacts in the Hetherington. Another artistically- inclined student, Mackenzie Stewart, has even worked on recreating the hairstyles of several fragmented Tanagra heads from the collection using Barbie dolls, for use in a future online exhibit that will explore fragmentation and archaeological remains. Because of the flexibility of the project, student volunteers from majors that may not have obvious connections to Anthropology or Classics are able to bring their own skills and perspectives to the project; this disciplinary diversity is what has guided the project throughout its existence.

One of our supplementary goals is to include as many hands-on, multi-sensory components in our outreach activities as possible. Since most of the objects are fragile and need to remain in the lab, this means using replica oil lamps and coins, worksheets, and craft activities to give our community members a meaningful connection to the objects in the Hetherington Collection.[35] One of our most memorable activities involved leading two classes of grade 3 and 4 students (ages 8–10, around 40 students in total) in an activity where the children designed and made *shabti* figurines out of quick-dry clay after learning about the *shabtis* in the Hetherington Collection. The activity, which was designed in consultation with the classroom teachers, helped them formulate questions about ancient Egypt, the nature of archaeology, and what life might have been like for people in the ancient Mediterranean world. In creating their own figurines, the grade school students were included as active participants in the study of antiquity as the *shabti*-making created a comfortable space in which they could express themselves creatively, reflect on how they might represent their own interests and lifestyles in their figurines, and learn about Egyptian funerary practices. The grade 3s and 4s were then able to take part in "social learning" alongside the university student volunteers who were working with them (see Figure 8.3).[36]

While direct impact in such a setting can be challenging to measure, we observed a high level of engagement among the grade 3 and 4 students during this activity. After a short presentation on the *shabtis* in the Hetherington Collection, each child was given a small questionnaire to help them consider what they might want to bring with them into the afterlife. Videogaming systems were often the first response but, after some careful thought, more personal objects were added

FIGURE 8.3 Colton Van Gerwen (undergraduate volunteer) at Harrow School, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

to their lists. At this point the volunteers circulated among the students, answering question after question about ancient Egypt, Egyptian funerary practices, and archaeology, while allowing the children to handle several of the replica objects from the Lux Project collection. After completing their questionnaires, the children designed their *shabtis* on paper and then were given clay to create them in three dimensions. The children were absorbed in their *shabti*-making and their creations showed meaningful connections, fulfilling the purpose of the activity. The hands-on nature of creating *shabtis* out of clay also allowed the children to consider the material aspects of antiquity, leading to a great deal of questions about how various objects used by the ancient Egyptians were manufactured (see Figure 8.4).

The presence of undergraduate volunteers as guides through these activities allowed grade school students to envision themselves as future university students. The undergraduate volunteers who have joined Lux outreach events have all been warmly received by the children, who often ask questions about what they study at university and what classes are like. Elementary school children are especially curious about what undergraduates do, and are keenly perceptive

FIGURE 8.4 Shabti made by grade 3 student at Harrow School, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

that these visitors are in an intermediary position between themselves and the other adults present (i.e., professors and teachers). Young children are often more comfortable speaking openly with the undergraduate volunteers who join classroom visits than they are with faculty visitors and so feel freer to ask questions, which leads to more meaningful connections with the material. For grade school students whose own circles may not include postsecondary alumni, this exposure also helps to demystify what happens at universities and what it can mean to be a university student.[37]

Undergraduate Students as Public Scholars and Their Importance to Local Outreach

We would like to return now to the concept of mutuality in public scholarship as we consider how small-scale, locally focused scholarly work like the Lux Project can help turn undergraduate students into public scholars. We begin this portion of the

discussion by considering the interactions between community members and scholars that public scholarship fosters as a form of "mutually beneficial exchange."[38] For Kezar et al., the most mutually engaged forms of public scholarship involve direct action within a home community;[39] so, following this concept, mutuality in our work is bivalent: student volunteers use their work as public scholars to communicate with their own university community and bring their peers into our work, but they also work with specific constituents in the broader Winnipeg community with an eye to introducing the ancient Mediterranean world to groups that have more often been excluded from its study. At the University of Winnipeg, most of our students are Winnipeggers/Manitobans still living in their home communities. These students come from a wide variety of ethnic groups and this diversity is reflected in the various identities of the Lux Project's volunteers; the ways they undertake public scholarship are "inextricably linked to (their) unique identities and strengthened by the significance of race, gender, sexuality, class, as well as other axes of difference and community perspectives" (as is true of all scholars).[40] As members of our academic community, the Lux Project student volunteers form an ideal bridge to the other communities they are also a part of, bringing their own unique sets of connections to the project. The kind of knowledge that being deeply embedded in one's community produces is invaluable to our work, because it allows us to think through the possible interests and needs of those groups at a more granular level. This can only be accessed through lived experience, while fostering organic, collaborative connections with the "publics" we work with. Consultation with the groups we visit outside of the university is also essential to creating projects that centre respect for the groups we are working with and makes those projects a much more collaborative experience for the community members themselves, so that when we arrive in a classroom or retirement home we are, collectively, a newly-formed group of cooperative learners. By embracing diverse communities of undergraduate students as public scholars in their own right and fostering connections with the equally diverse publics of Winnipeg itself, the Lux Project has repurposed the objects that arrived at our institution over a century ago from symbols of colonialism and empire to tools that aid in fostering more equitable engagement with the ancient Mediterranean.

Conclusion

Our experiences with local outreach here in Winnipeg have led us to offer several recommendations for those hoping to involve their own undergraduate students in local public scholarship. Our recommendations are guided by Kezar et al.'s emphasis on equity and mutuality in public work. They are as follows:

(1) Let undergraduate students determine the scope of the project as a means to foster purposeful connections to the material. By encouraging them to identify the skill sets and expertise they bring to your project, as well as the skills they would like to develop, they are empowered to work with the material on

their own terms and so can become public scholars in a manner authentic to themselves and their experiences;

(2) Determine the specific constituencies with whom you would like to build connections. It is useful to consider whether there are existing organic connections between community groups and project members and, if so, to foster the relationships with these groups. Ask yourself: how can those relationships help you build meaningful connections and how can those connections nourish pre-existing relationships in return?;

(3) Seek out local knowledge infrastructure that fosters intuitive connections to the material you are hoping to share. In the case of the Lux Project, an existing public lecture series, the University of Winnipeg's "retirement lectures," offered us a welcoming audience to begin developing relationships beyond the institution. Grade school curricula are an excellent opportunity to connect with diverse groups, and classroom visits, in particular, foster creativity on both sides of the interaction between public scholars and children;

(4) Be ready to adapt your work to the needs of your undergraduate scholars and the communities with whom you are working, and be open to outcomes you may not have anticipated. Especially when working with groups in person, expect that the conversation will be drawn into unexpected areas. A child's question can spark a new research direction or the knowledge of a community member might help you better understand your own material.

The small scale of our project has proven to be its greatest advantage. Although at the outset of the project we identified several key goals that would shape its work (directed towards sharing the Hetherington Collection with local audiences), we have not been tied to any specific outcomes or metrics. Because we are not chasing any benchmarks, we can shift our priorities with each new group of student volunteers, as they identify their own goals in working with the collection and in their educational trajectories. This also means that our research is rather exploratory and relaxed; the sense of joy among the student volunteers in the lab as we document the objects and devise new ways to reach the community is palpable. Our work, therefore, is authentic to both the undergraduate volunteers who are the heart of the project, but also to the "publics" with whom we work; such authenticity fosters deep and sustained engagements with antiquity among both groups of stakeholders – students and publics alike.[41] In the case of the Lux Project, which takes place in a tightly networked city like Winnipeg, interpersonal relationships have been central to forging new contacts. Over time, those relationships have become more reciprocal and, therefore, durable; these same relationships often support connections to other community members. In fact, this is the means by which we measure the impact of our work: the high retention rate of undergraduate volunteers from year to year and the ongoing nature of the relationships we have fostered testifies to the importance of the Lux Project's initiatives. Student

knowledge drives these connections to the public, a process that is particularly empowering for them as they begin to identify as researchers and public scholars.

Appendix: Student Responses to Working with the Lux Project

We append the following remarks from the three student volunteers who have contributed to this chapter (Bourke, Kira, and Colton) on their experiences with the Lux Project; we hope such reflections will encourage others to consider how they and their own students might become public scholars in their own local communities. Here, student volunteers consider the impact of their work with the Lux Project on themselves and their own educational paths:

Bourke on her public presentations through Lux: "One of the incredible opportunities I experienced with the Lux Project was the chance to hear modern and international voices about the very modern issues of ancient artifacts. The Lux Project allowed me to hear a wide range of opinions, feelings, and discussions concerning the handling of ancient artifacts. The ownership and display of ancient artifacts is a far more relevant issue than I ever would have expected before joining the project, and I plan on taking that knowledge with me into my future studies. It was also so valuable to me to have the opportunity to talk to the kids and get them excited about our work. From the multiple public speeches to international conferences, and teaching the next generation, the Lux Project has been such an incredible and eye-opening experience for which I am immensely grateful."

Kira on her experiences as an education student working on Lux: "I have done the Lux worksheets with my students and will continue to use them and speak of my experiences with researching the objects as I continue my teaching journey. I was given the opportunity to speak to a grade 3 class about the summer research I conducted on our *shabtis*, cups and Osiris figurines. The students were very engaged and had so many great questions about our objects! It is so important for students to connect with history, as often it can be seen as a 'boring' and 'dull' subject; but the Lux Project, through our worksheets and classroom visits, has allowed students to have a hands-on learning experience about the ancient world! Being able to hold the ancient world in your hands is an amazing way for students to spark an interest in classics; it certainly sparked mine!"

Colton on his research with Lux: "Through a hands-on approach to studying the Hetherington Collection with the Lux Project, I have been able to cultivate a more thorough understanding of the regular people of the ancient Mediterranean world. This has undoubtedly helped me to better connect with these ancient people, about whom we as students of the ancient world are often more accustomed to learning in an academic, classroom context, and less so through the hands-on study of their material culture. It is a surreal experience to be able to see and hold handmade objects of ancient people before oneself, and, for a brief moment in time, it feels as though that the gap spanning thousands of years which separates oneself from the people from antiquity who made these objects does not exist."

Notes

1 The authors would like to thank the editors, particularly Sabrina Higgins, as well as the other contributors to the volume for their helpful comments on various drafts of this chapter. Val McKinley, retired curator of the Anthropology Museum at the University of Winnipeg, and Jodi Schmidt, Lab Technician in the Anthropology Lab, have been faithful supporters and critical interlocutors of the Lux Project from its inception, while Eric Thrift, Val's successor, has already inspired further fruitful engagements with the Hetherington Collection. We are grateful for their ongoing support.
2 The collection itself has long been used in anthropology and archaeology classes at the University of Winnipeg.
3 At the beginning of each academic year, student volunteers are recruited at an event called "Roll Call", where all student clubs at the University of Winnipeg have booths to introduce themselves to the student body.
4 In order to clarify the groups we work with, and make the distinction between differing groups of students, we refer throughout this chapter to the undergraduate students who work on the project as "volunteers" or "student volunteers." In the Canadian context, undergraduate students are typically ages 18–25, although there is some variability of this age range depending on personal circumstances. The student volunteers who take part in the Lux Project represent majors from across the faculties of the University of Winnipeg, including Arts, Science, Business, and Kinesiology.
5 See, for example, Stevenson's (2019, 236) call for institutions to rethink their relationship to collections of Egyptian artefacts.
6 Adamson 2021.
7 Kezar et al. 2018, 4–5. Adamson also sees "knowledge mobilization" (a typical term for public scholarship used in the humanities) as a vector for "ethical promotion of the common good" (2021).
8 Kezar et al. 2018, 6. See Abd el-Gawad's contribution in this volume for a discussion of the inclusion of descendant communities in public scholarship efforts involving their material culture (in this case Egyptian material culture) and Gallart Marques for local audiences and museum engagement in Latin America.
9 Kezar et al. 2018, 8–9.
10 See Tummons 2018, 25–26 on the challenges of identifying faculty and students as a community of scholarly practice.
11 See Austen and Gardner's contribution to this volume on leading students in public-facing scholarship (in their case, *Wikipedia* editing).
12 Personal correspondence with Dr R.B. Todd, retired professor of Classics from the University of British Columbia.
13 Currelly, who was in London in 1902 to study the social gospel among the working class, met Petrie by chance at the British Museum; Petrie almost immediately took Currelly on as an assistant and brought him to Egypt later that year (Matthews 2006, 17).
14 "Artefacts of Excavation," Winnipeg | Artefacts of Excavation, accessed June 22, 2023. https://egyptartefacts.griffith.ox.ac.uk/destinations/winnipeg.
15 Consultation with Dr. Ross Thomas, the late curator of Roman collections at the British Museum, was undertaken in the fall of 2019, with the conclusion that many of the objects acquired after 1903 had likely come from the Palestine Exploration Fund and the British School at Athens.
16 University of Winnipeg Communications 2021. Because Hetherington himself had been a Methodist missionary in the Klondike at the same time as Currelly was posted to Manitoba, some have suggested that the two men would have known each other. Hetherington had also been a faculty member at Columbian College in British Columbia around the time that Siprell received his shipment from the EES.

17 "Artefacts of Excavation," DIST.20.035 | Artefacts of Excavation, accessed June 22, 2023, https://egyptartefacts.griffith.ox.ac.uk/documents/dist-20-035.
18 For further discussions on the coloniality of collecting, see Rodgers, Chapter 5 of this volume.
19 Stevenson 2019, 107.
20 For example, at the beginning of the twentieth century, major Egyptian museums featured *salles de vente*, from which the general public could purchase ancient objects.
21 The cultural and economic diversity of Winnipeg may be observed in information collected in the 2021 federal census. https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&SearchText=winnipeg&GENDERlist=1&STATISTIClist=1&DGUIDlist=2021A00054611040&HEADERlist=0.
22 This content is included in the grade 3 and grade 8 provincial curricula: Government of Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning et al. 2004; and Government of Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning and Bothe 2006. In Manitoba, grade 3 students are typically 8–9 years old, while grade 8 students are 13–14 years old.
23 Sayer 2019, 6..
24 See Funke 2022 on the colonial nostalgia and narrative presented by the exterior sculpture on this building.
25 An example of this is the "Olympus" exhibit that visited the Winnipeg Art Gallery in 2016 (https://www.wag.ca/exhibitions/olympus/), with an entry fee of over $20 CDN.
26 See, for example, the recent claims to the Rosetta Stone, currently held by the British Museum. https://www.npr.org/2022/10/12/1128288196/egypt-calls-for-the-return-of-the-rosetta-stone-and-other-ancient-artifacts. See Stevenson 2019: 230 on repatriation of Egyptian antiquities and the responsibility of colonial powers to the objects removed from Egypt under their regimes. Johnston et al. in this volume offers several possibilities for employing 3D replicas as part of the repatriation process.
27 Stevenson 2019, 5.
28 Here we reflect on the advice of Adamson (2021) to capitalise on the expertise of staff in intermediary positions in undertaking public scholarship.
29 Here we reiterate our gratitude for the contributions of Val McKinley, the retired curator of the Anthropology Museum, who offered much welcome guidance and graciously opened the Anthropology lab to us in the first few years of the Lux Project's existence.
30 We typically consult with the groups we work with ahead of our visits to adapt our activities to their needs and interests.
31 *Shabtis* (alt. *ushabti*) are small figurines, typically ceramic, placed in ancient Egyptian graves for the purpose of performing manual labour on behalf of the deceased in the afterlife. They were mass-produced and commonly used from the Paleolithic through the Roman periods, meaning that a great variety survive. There are several from a variety of periods in the Hetherington Collection.
32 The worksheets created by Lux volunteers can be found at https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/classics/the-lux-project.html.
33 Folklorama is a long-running (over 50 years) cultural festival in Winnipeg, in which various ethnic communities organise pavilions where visitors can sample that group's food and drink, watch performances, and view cultural displays. Each pavilion hosts thousands of visitors over the course of a week. During the 2024 iteration of the Egyptian pavilion, Lux Project volunteers led children's activities centred on our collection of shabtis and talked with visitors about the Egyptian antiquities in the Hetherington Collection.
34 See Johnston et al. in this volume on collaborative pedagogies.
35 The replica objects have proven especially popular with the school children and elders we visit, as they can have the experience of handling objects without fear of damaging them.

Small children, in particular, are thrilled to be told that they can in fact touch and even play with some of the replica objects. See Sayer 2019, 69, for a discussion on handling collections and Johnston et al., this volume, for using 3D printed objects in the classroom.

36 Sayer 2019, 180, on social learning and the importance of participation, reflection, and personal experience in studying history.

37 A 2011 analysis of first-generation access to post-secondary education in Canada among under-represented and minority groups found that among all variables (household income, racial identity, location of community, etc.), academic engagement showed the largest effect on student participation in post-secondary schooling (Finne, Childs, and Wismer 2011, 22). Although we recognise the limitations of our work in school settings, we hope through the presence of undergraduate volunteers, many of whom are first-generation post-secondary students themselves, to model the kind of academic engagement that will help the grade school students we work with see themselves as potential university students too.

38 Clark-Taylor et al. 2018, 180.

39 Kezar et al. 2018, 9.

40 Clark-Taylor et al. 2018, 181.

41 Cf. Clark-Taylor et al. 2018, 193 on authenticity and ethics in community-engaged scholarship.

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9

TEACHING THE ANCIENT WORLD WITH REPRODUCTIONS

Using 3D Printed Objects in Authentic Active History Learning

Christine L. Johnston, Alan Wheeler, Alexis Nunn, and Erin Escobar

> We learn an art or craft by doing the things that we shall have to do when we have learnt it: for instance, men become builders by building houses, lyre-players by playing the lyre.
>
> *Aristotle* Nicomachean Ethics *2.1.4*

> Remember, the talking about the thing isn't the thing. Doing the thing is the thing.
>
> *Amy Poehler,* Yes Please *253*

Introduction[1]

In the past decade, the fields of ancient history, archaeology, and classics have been facing increasing calls for reform.[2] Critiques of the colonial origins of these disciplines, the embedded Eurocentric and white-supremacist ideals woven into their methods and literary canons, and the enduring lack of diversity of its practitioners have drawn into sharp relief the need for change.[3] In addition, decreasing university funding and – in some cases – decreasing enrolments, have brought ancient history and many of its related disciplines in the humanities and social sciences into unprecedented academic precarity.[4] The confluence of these two disciplinary existential crises necessitates that we, as educators, reflexively evaluate and adapt how and what we are teaching in order to provide diverse student populations with training in fields within which they could imagine a future for themselves.[5] Reimagining our teaching practices is a crucially important endeavour that can serve to create a more inclusive learning environment for all students—from the primary to the post-secondary level, and from the major-specific seminar to the general-education survey.

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A fundamental part of this reimagining is an explicit interrogation of the toxic and harmful legacies of the dominant historiographic narratives that prioritise the histories of so-called "Western Civilization,"[6] with a particular focus on the physical remnants of extractive exploitation in the form of displaced cultural heritage and museum holdings.[7] The ability to connect to past peoples and cultures should not be limited to those who prescribe to a perceived "Western Civilization" heritage or the authority bestowed on its artistic and literary canons,[8] nor those privileged enough to travel to ancient monuments and elite institutions in the major cities of Europe and North America, where museum collections are commonly held. Countering these barriers requires a direct acknowledgement within the classroom of the material legacies of colonial extraction throughout the history of archaeology.

The pedagogical research presented here has been undertaken by the Ancient World in 3D Project, a collaborative initiative between faculty and graduate students in the Department of History at Western Washington University (WWU)[9]. The project was inspired by the emerging use of 3D-printed objects in museums to enhance accessibility for patrons with visual impairments by providing touchable reproductions of famous artworks and monuments.[10] Following this model, the Ancient World in 3D Project was conceived with the aim of enriching the ancient history curriculum at WWU through object-based learning by employing feminist and anti-colonial pedagogical principles that decentre traditional canons and acknowledge their political nature, prioritise diverse perspectives and experiences, and critique collecting and display practices.[11] As a team comprised of white and biracial settler-descendants living in the United States and Canada, working and studying at a university built on the ancestral homelands of the Indigenous Peoples of the Salish Sea basin and the North Cascades watershed, we undertook this project as part of the ongoing process of dismantling the legacies of settler-colonialism within our own knowledge structures and knowledge-sharing practices.[12] We also situate these practices within our educational environment of WWU, which is a public university with a diverse student body.[13] Knowledge emplacement is further embedded in our teaching modules through the incorporation of Indigenous scholarship and North American cultural heritage examples.

The first step of the project involved designing learning modules using 3D-printed reproductions that give students the opportunity to apply historical and archaeological methods in the classroom. The second project phase tested the pedagogical efficacy of these object-based learning modules through in-class research using qualitative methods (specifically, student surveys).[14] Teaching modules on the decipherment and interpretation of ancient scripts and texts and the study of Greco-Roman coins were initially designed for the project and used during the in-class research phase.[15] A third module on cultural heritage has subsequently been developed and is presented in this chapter. This module focuses explicitly on the uses (and misuses) of digital reproductions by engaging with their materiality through guided discussions and activities related to object provenance,

cultural heritage protection, the histories of looting and antiquities trading, and digital reproduction and access. The future of museum holdings and display are discussed in conjunction with the opportunities afforded by digital technologies, particularly 3D printing and virtual reality, which offers new avenues of reconciliation and repatriation but also posing risks of re-enacting colonial extraction.[16]

Authentic Activities, Collaborative Experiences, and Significant Learning

Experiential learning, also known as "Active Learning," has long been recognised as an effective pedagogical method within the learning sciences.[17] Constructivism, the dominant learning paradigm among the humanities and social sciences, has incorporated experiential learning among its teaching practices for nearly a century.[18] Constructivist methods are grounded upon the premise that "knowledge cannot be transmitted but must be constructed by the mental activity of learners."[19] Learning is therefore an active and conscious process in which the learner participates mentally and sometimes physically in critical thinking and problem solving, through which new information is integrated within their individual and cultural knowledge structures.[20] This integration process comprises a metacognitive awareness by learners of how ideas are being applied,[21] which has proven to be a crucial component of information processing and learning retention.[22] In this way, learners "co-produce knowledge"[23] as a result of shifting away from passive agency and by focusing on "a meta-cognitive awareness about what is being done."[24] Constructivist learning goals can thus incorporate not only the base cognitive objective of remembering foundational knowledge, but also procedural learning involving the higher cognitive levels (e.g., Application, Analysis, and Evaluation in Bloom's well-known taxonomy).[25]

Experiential learning activities are considered to be "authentic" when the activities undertaken by the learner mirror the practices engaged in by professionals in that field (e.g., Aristotle's argument quoted above about learning to be a lyre-player through physically playing the lyre).[26] By designing activities that are relevant to the learner and that allow them to participate in the same type of work as the professional practitioner, learners are provided with the opportunity to develop a "disciplinary mind."[27] For the modules developed by the Ancient World in 3D project, this includes the direct study of cultural material using methods employed by specialists like numismatists, philologists, or museum professionals. By being given the opportunity to engage in the methods and processes (i.e., the epistemology) of a field, students are effectively inducted into a discipline's "community of practice."[28]

A secondary tenet of experiential learning is the understanding that collaborative pedagogies enhance learning retention. Pedagogical and psychological research demonstrates that students learn most effectively when learning

together,[29] particularly when engaged in group work centred on problem-solving.[30] This research has shown that group learning improves not only higher-level reasoning and learning retention, but also moral reasoning.[31] Designing activities around collective problem-solving is, therefore, "not just a convenient way to accumulate the individual knowledge of their members," but instead creates learning experiences that "give rise synergistically to insights and solutions that would not come about without them."[32] Excellent examples of collaborative learning resources that provide opportunities for authentic historical work are text markup platforms like Papyri.info's Papyrological Editor.[33] This tool not only facilitates group learning, which promotes learning retention, but also allows students to participate in digital publication, further inducting them into Egyptological communities of practice.[34]

The modules produced by the Ancient World in 3D project incorporate experiential and collaborative pedagogies by centring group work and object-based learning using authentic epistemologies. The focus on participation within the disciplinary communities of practice builds on the feminist assertion that university spaces are not fundamentally distinct from life beyond college, but in fact have always been "a part of our real world experience, and our real life."[35] Connecting classroom learning to real life not only allows for, but demands, an acknowledgement that education is inherently political.[36] This political nature extends to the histories of our fields, the methods we use, and the canons we uphold. Acknowledging the political nature of our teaching thus necessitates the design of a pedagogical framework that brings together cognitive and affective learning goals that not only promote learning retention through active inquiry, but also through the incorporation of a values-based emphasis on building inclusive communities.[37]

Combining a values-based emphasis on inclusive critical competencies—such as complex problem solving, respect for others, principled ethical behaviour, interest in lifelong learning, and interpersonal skills[38]– with learning contextualised within the real world and the lived experiences of the student serves to promote opportunities for "significant learning" (also known as "deep learning"). The Significant Learning paradigm is notable for its incorporation of both cognitive and affective learning domains in a relational structure (see Chapter 6, Figure 6.1).[39] Learning goals within these domains include both traditional cognitive learning objectives (e.g., knowledge acquisition)[40] and affective or social goals (e.g., the development of communication and leadership skills).[41] This values-based emphasis on including social/affective goals alongside cognitive goals reflects a social justice view of learning that accepts that learning goals in any course "should include but also go beyond content mastery."[42] According to L.Dee Fink, the developer of the Significant Learning taxonomy, this combination of learning goals best serves to enhance learning retention and position the learner for continued growth:

> If students learn to apply content, can see how it connects with other knowledge, understand the human implications of what they have learned, and come to care about the subject and about learning how to keep on learning, it seems much likelier that they will both retain what they have learned and continue to enlarge their knowledge after the course is over.[43]

The cultural heritage learning module presented here is designed to promote this type of values-based significant learning.

Talking About Cultural Heritage with Digital Reproductions

Digital technologies have been adopted by historians and archaeologists for a variety of applications related to research, teaching, and publication.[44] As new digital tools and platforms have emerged, debates have followed around the ethical uses of new technology, particularly in relation to intellectual property, cultural heritage, and data sovereignty.[45] In many ways, the development of 3D capture, printing, and digital rendering technologies build upon existing conversations around reproductions of cultural heritage, including topics such as context and decontextualisation, materiality and dematerialisation, data accessibility, and reproduction authenticity.[46] The creation of digital renderings thus necessitates transparent conversations around the presumed objectivity of digital presentation, which often ignores the role of the illustrator or 3D modeller in creating digital reproductions.[47]

The ethics of digital capture and reproduction as tools for cultural heritage protection or restitution are particularly challenging in relation to contested holdings and cultural heritage that has faced deliberate destruction. In the aftermath of cultural heritage loss, digital reconstruction has emerged as a popular public-facing response, as was the case with the reconstructions of the Arch of Triumph from Palmyra and the holographic projection of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan.[48] However, important critiques have highlighted the colonial and racist political narratives underpinning the assumption of cultural heritage stewardship reflected in these reconstructions, as well as the need to centre the goals and voices of local communities in restoration efforts.[49] Most vitally, Roshni Khunti advocates for the recentring of the human beings impacted by such violence; without this focus, reconstructions like those of the Palmyran Arch of Triumph are reduced to "token responses" that celebrate technological advances while downplaying human loss, all of which can serve to distract audiences from the insufficient human rights interventions taken by the nations hosting these displays.[50]

The frequent omission of descendent community perspectives is perhaps most glaringly evident in the highly publicised use of 3D technology to digitally reproduce the vocal tract of Nesyamun, an Egyptian scribe and priest who lived during the reign of Ramesses XI (20th Dynasty, ca. 1099–1069 BCE).[51] The publication of this project, enthusiastically shared through broad media outlets headed by sensational click-bait titles, claimed to provide innovative connections to the

past and to "restore" the voice of Nesyamun. This claim, made on behalf of an Egyptian ancestor displaced from their land and held in a foreign museum (Leeds City Museum), is reflective of a Eurocentric sense of entitlement and privileging of scientific inquiry.[52] Yet, even within western dominant scientific frameworks, the epistemic value of this project has been critiqued as flawed: "far from providing any insight into the ancient past, this appropriation underscores more recent fetishization with the perceived abilities of science to further understanding."[53] It also reflects a profound failure to engage in community-based research design that centres the voices of descendent communities. Conversely, when such methods are adopted – as, for example, with the collaboration between the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History and the Łingít (Tlingit) Nation of southeast Alaska, discussed below – digital scanning and rendering technologies can serve as excellent paths towards reconciliation and repatriation.[54]

Our cultural heritage teaching module centres these ethical questions around museum holdings, scientific research and epistemologies, and cultural heritage reproduction and dissemination. Integral to these conversations are issues of voice and cultural engagement,[55] as well as data sovereignty and eventual access to digital resources (e.g., the impact of "digital divides").[56] The material nature of 3D reproductions creates the opportunity for students to consider ideological and affective engagement with cultural heritage, including the "thrill of proximity"[57] that patrons feel when encountering cultural heritage due to its "pastness."[58] Pedagogically, incorporating 3D models also affords students personal "haptic" experience through which they can consider the role of reproductions in providing "multi-sensorial forms of experiencing culture [that] have a great benefit for the accessibility of cultural heritage, especially for persons with learning difficulties, for children, the elderly, for blind or visually impaired visitors."[59] The goal is for learners to critically connect and evaluate these aspects of accessibility with the broader ethics of cultural heritage displacement and collecting practices.

Learning Module: Cultural Heritage, Museum Holdings, and Restitution

The module presented here is designed as an "educationally purposeful activity" using 3D-printed reproductions that scaffolds learning experiences around explicit and tangible learning outcomes.[60] Our object-based approach incorporates museum holdings and tasks students to use a materials-oriented perspective in order to explore "present contemporary meanings and narratives around collections" in order to "highlight the processes through which knowledge is constructed."[61] Following Fink's Taxonomy of Significant Learning, the learning objectives for the module include both cognitive and affective goals, designed to situate the learning within broader course content and discussions (see "Learning Objectives" in the Appendix[62]). The module is designed to address three topics: the histories and ethics of museum holdings, the impact of looting and the antiquities

trade, and future paths to restitution and repatriation. Each of these three topics is addressed using a 3D-printed object(s): an Egyptian heart scarab, Cycladic figurines, and the bust of Nefertiti.[63] These objects were selected in order to serve the specific goals of introductory ancient Mediterranean studies courses, however object substitutions could tailor the assignment to courses of varying focus.[64]

There is also flexibility in the design of the module in order to fit different learning environments. The module includes both group and individual work, structured to take place across two course meetings with independent work assigned in between (the group and individual worksheets can be found in the Appendix). This could be modified to be completed within a single meeting, should students have access to computers within the classroom. The module could also be expanded to include museum visits or collections assessment, should such resources be available.[65] If 3D-printing resources are not available, in-class activities could involve the manual production of reproductions (e.g., making simple clay figurines).[66] Depending on the course topic and student preparation, the background information provided before the object analysis can also be adjusted. The module plan in the Appendix includes suggested multimedia materials to be assigned in advance of course meeting, as well as supplementary resources.

Module Topic: The Histories and Ethics of Museum Holdings

The first part of the module focuses on the role of archaeologists and historians in the colonial extraction of cultural heritage, which we see as a necessary topic for any Ancient Mediterranean studies course. This includes reflexive discussion that seeks to "contextualize the present situation by tracing archaeologists' (and physical anthropologists') current position of power to both colonization and the historical reality of the egregious acts that led to the collections held by museums, universities, and historical societies internationally."[67] This conversation addresses both the epistemic injustices underpinning the Eurocentric assessment and presentation of the past, as well as the ongoing realities of colonialism in the places that we work and teach.[68] Accordingly, theoretical critiques from Indigenous Archaeologies and postcolonial scholars frame the discussion in this module.[69]

Museum holdings are an apposite topic for such conversations. Collecting practices and the history of cultural heritage displacement, including the development of museums and major pieces of cultural heritage legislation, provide the core foundational knowledge of this learning module. The assigned readings and media focus on the critical assessment of the impacts of western dominant science epistemologies on the formation, organisation, and presentation of these holdings, with particular focus on the misguided assumption of the role as "self-appointed steward of cultural heritage" by archaeologists and museum professionals – an assumed role that is "founded on the false assumptions of our anthropological predecessors."[70] This claimed authority reflects an assumed ownership of the past that

extends beyond the physical possession of displaced cultural heritage to include "privileged access to archaeological remains, privileged ability to interpret the record and write the stories of the past from those remains, and privileged right to speak on behalf of the record."[71] In this way, archaeology has been critiqued as a form of "epistemicide" through its exclusive privileging of western dominant taxonomies, methods, and theories.[72]

This "epistemicide" also includes a conscious "privileging (of) the material, scientific, observable world over the spiritual, experiential, and unquantifiable aspects of archaeological sites, ancient peoples, and artifacts," using methodologies "solidly grounded in Western ways of categorizing, knowing, and interpreting the world."[73] This drive to collect, categorise, define, and display flourished through enlightenment-era imperialism and humanism, and is reflected in the presence of not only cultural materials or antiquities in museum holdings, but also collections of flora and fauna.[74] The learning module tasks students with exploring the broader goals and motives of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century collecting practices through holdings research, highlighting the role of western dominant science in both colonial extraction and in the "re-arrangement, representation, and re-distribution" of these holdings.[75] Students are encouraged to consider postcolonial and Indigenous archaeological critiques of these traditional collecting practices while researching the histories and operational missions of museums, and the origins, contents, and organisation of the museum holdings. For this assignment, students explore the types of materials included in the holdings of the museum in which the object(s) chosen for the activity is held (e.g., in this module, we examined an Egyptian Heart Scarab held at Durham University; Figure 9.1).

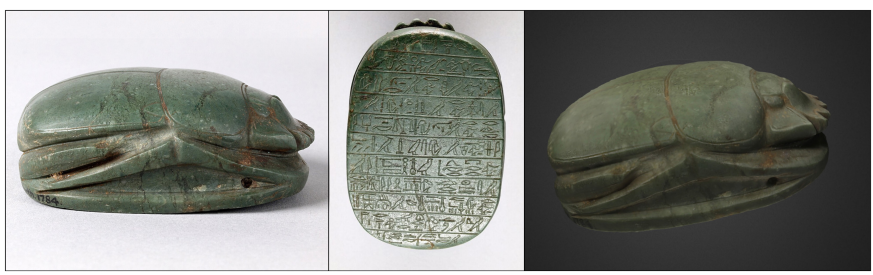

FIGURE 9.1 Left and Centre: Jasper Heart Scarab, Durham University Oriental Museum inv. EG5270 (Northumberland Collection; image reproduced courtesy of the Durham University); Right: model by Cole Kelly for Durham University (Sketchfab: https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/heart-scarab-3252dbf0af2b4d5c8a58797eec2a8102).

Module Topic: Looting and the Antiquities Trade

The movement and displacement of cultural heritage was a major and unfortunate outcome of antiquarian exploration and early archaeological excavation throughout the Mediterranean, West Asia, and North Africa.[76] This material, dispersed throughout museums and universities across the globe – particularly in the global North – is abundant,[77] and includes both excavated and donated or bequeathed collections (e.g., holdings acquired through travel or private sale). Much of these holdings lack detailed provenance (i.e., documented histories of ownership), which significantly limits their research utility, negating one justification for their continued holding and display.[78]

The acceptance and display of donated collections has been a point of considerable debate within the archaeological and museum communities for many decades, with important and sometimes conflicting concerns raised about: the problematic legitimisation of unprovenanced materials;[79] the objective of providing "safe havens" for looted antiquities;[80] and the desire to maintain access to – and intervene within – the art trade by avoiding driving the market underground.[81] The collections under such discussions include both legacy materials as well as more recently looted cultural heritage.[82] In recent years, the public discourse around looting and cultural heritage protection has become dominated by well-documented episodes of cultural heritage looting and destruction by insurgent or terrorist groups.[83]

The histories of looting and the antiquities trade are outlined in this section of the module, including detailed discussion of the sources of extracted heritage and the market for illicit antiquities. Case study examples relevant to the topic of the course are included in this portion of the discussion. Highly publicised events, such as the destruction of the Roman ruins at Palmyra, the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan, and the conflagration of the Notre Dame Cathedral, can represent existing learner knowledge of cultural heritage damage within very different historical and geopolitical contexts onto which discussion can be scaffolded. Connecting looting practices to high-profile events of cultural heritage damage or destruction also supports both the "caring" and "human dimension" learning objectives of this module.

The module builds on the previous section on museum holdings and collecting practices by deepening discussions of archaeological context and object provenance.[84] For this section of the module, the discussion centres around 3D-printed Cycladic figurines (Figures 9.2 and 9.3). Cycladic figurines were selected due to the high proportion of examples that lack provenance,[85] as well as the documented frequency with which faked examples of this material type have been produced and circulated.[86] This is therefore an excellent material type around which discussions relating to object authenticity and the impact of lost archaeological context can be framed. Importantly, like the heart scarab, Cycladic figurines were frequently deposited as mortuary goods, which allows for connections to be drawn

FIGURE 9.2 Left: Cycladic Marble Head, ca. 2700–2500 BCE (Met. Museum inv. 64.246, public domain); Right: 3D print reproduced from the model made by Scan the World (https://www.myminifactory.com/object/3d-print-head-of-a-woman-28673).

between archaeological practices focusing on tombs and elite goods, as well as the ethical implications of collecting or displaying funerary materials; it also prompts questions about the ethics of scanning and digitally reproducing such holdings. Although the module does not focus on ancestral human remains, this topic is an important component of the discussion around funerary excavation. This portion of the module discussion should prioritise sources and materials that centre voices of the appropriate descendent communities.[87]

Module Topic: Future Paths to Restitution and Repatriation

Since the turn of the century, museum curators and collectors have come under increasing pressure to evaluate the provenance of their holdings more exhaustively and transparently,[88] and to repatriate objects of cultural significance or of dubious acquisition.[89] This discussion has increasingly played out in public forums, including popular film (e.g., Marvel's *Black Panther*) and television (e.g., John Oliver's *Last Week Tonight*).[90] Highly publicised repatriation events by major institutions have also highlighted a shifting collective awareness of – and desire for – cultural heritage return as part of decolonial work.[91] Importantly, this movement towards restitution "also takes the form of a radical questioning of the museum institution,

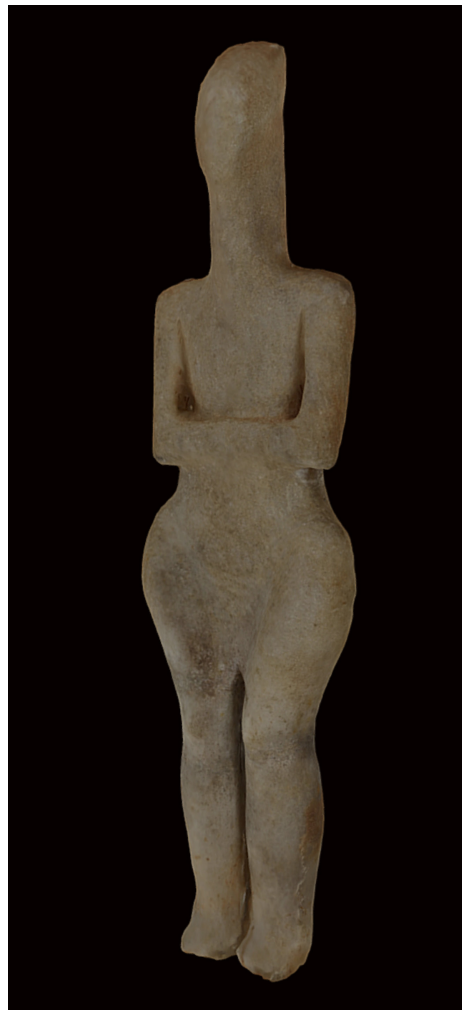

FIGURE 9.3 3D Model of a Plastiras Type Cycladic Figurine, ca. 3000–2800 BCE (model by the British Museum, SketchFab: https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/cycladic-figurine-948a37048c3548e29f3ac0a807813418, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0; based on British Museum inv. 1890,0921.5).

the epistemic authority of the disciplines built around these collections, and the usefulness of these very holdings."[92]

These discussions have also been impacted by the advancement of digital technologies, particularly 3D printing and virtual reality, which are offering new opportunities for reconciliation and anti-colonial initiatives. This can involve the creation of digital reproductions of holdings, after which cultural heritage can

be returned to their source or descendent communities.[93] An excellent example of this type of repatriation can be seen in the collaboration between the Łingít (Tlingit) community of southeast Alaska and the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in the United States, who worked together to digitise sacred objects, objects of cultural patrimony, and funerary objects, after which these holdings were returned to the Łingít.[94] This collaboration demonstrates the potential of responsible creation of digital reproductions as a strategy of repatriation and reconciliation. It is fundamentally important, however, to recognise that "digital restitution in itself is not a substitute for physical restitution."[95]

Digital technologies have predominantly been used with the goal of expanding cultural heritage access, especially the digital dissemination of 3D models to numerous communities across vast distances.[96] Reproduction and dissemination, however, first require ethical consideration of the object, its provenance, and the goals and interests of descendent and source communities (including their rights of refusal).[97] To view this process as anti-colonial or democratising, it is also necessary that these models be shared equitably with different stakeholders (when appropriate) in order to avoid new forms of "digital colonialism" in which "the colonial legacies and paternal policies which shaped acquisition can migrate from the physical to the digital realm."[98] Digital models can reproduce colonial extraction through unequal access (e.g., as a result of digital divides), as well as their commercial exploitation (e.g., the selling of digital reproductions in museum contexts).[99]

Outside of official repatriation efforts, digital reproductions have also been used in "repatriation activism,"[100] most notably with the so-called "Nefertiti Hack."[101] As part of their *The Other Nefertiti* exhibition in 2017, digital artists Nora al-Badri and Jan Nikolai Nelles displayed a digital reproduction of the famous bust, reportedly created from an unsanctioned scan by the artists during a visit to Berlin's Neues Museum in 2015.[102] They then released this scan into the public domain and, after the exhibition, a digital reproduction was buried in Egypt, allowing Nefertiti to finally "return to the place where it was found" for the first time in over 100 years.[103] Whether this has meaningfully improved access to the bust for modern Egyptian communities is still unclear.

The same bust of Nefertiti (made from a scan subsequently released by the Neues Museum in 2019) serves as the final 3D object reproduction in this module (Figure 9.4). This bust represents one of the most recognisable pieces of cultural heritage in the world and provides an excellent case study for provenance and repatriation, given its well-documented and contested history.[104] The module brings together the evaluation of the bust with a substantial discussion of North American collecting practices, recognising our classroom's emplacement within the United States. Grounding the discussion of restitution in relation to a famous example (e.g., the bust of Nefertiti), in conjunction with discussions about contemporary cultural heritage issues within their community, encourages students to integrate their course learning with their pre-existing knowledge around museum display, collecting practices, and calls for repatriation and restitution.

FIGURE 9.4 3D Print of the Bust of Nefertiti reproduced from the model by Scan the World (https://www.myminifactory.com/object/3d-print-bust-of-nefertiti-at-the-egyptian-museum-berlin-2951).

Conclusion

The cultural heritage learning module presented above uses digital reproductions to create experiential and collaborative learning activities that embody feminist and anti-colonial pedagogical principles by challenging and decentering traditional epistemologies and canons and underscoring the political nature of education. Accordingly, the module emphasises the importance of both cognitive and affective learning goals to encourage learners to integrate the material of the module within their broader individual and social knowledge networks, enhancing their learning retention.

Using digital reproductions also serves to forefront a metacognitive consideration of the value of digital tools in both classroom and museum spaces. This includes enhanced accessibility for students or museum patrons with visual impairments, as well as the potential for digital resources to "democratize" access to cultural heritage. Central to this discussion are questions of access, including the danger of reinforcing inequities as a result of "digital divides" or by participating in "digital colonialism." This discussion is framed by Indigenous and postcolonial methodologies that highlight and critique the western dominant epistemological grounding of traditional collecting and display practices.

These discussions help to promote digital literacy by highlighting the fact that "digital media is not a neutral tool,"[105] but rather represents the productive work of an human being, whose choices create knowledge that is as much "a creation of the archaeologist as it is of the past."[106] In many ways, 3D technologies simply represent the latest development of monument or object representation within archaeological practice, which is rooted in specific forms of knowledge production, often built on the fallacy of objectivity.[107] Such practices can also reinforce coloniality through economic exploitation (e.g., selling digital reproductions within museums), as well as the reinforcement of disciplinary canons (through the preferential digitisation of certain holdings).[108] As such, the incorporation of digital reproductions within the classroom can serve to ground transparent and critical reflections of our disciplinary epistemologies.

Finally, this critical reflection involves an explicit interrogation of the historiographies of our fields, as well as the material legacies that they have generated. These legacies – including the material collections held within institutions and the privileged right to access or study them – continue to engender numerous forms of social capital and economic capital for historians and archaeologists working today, including historical expertise, publications, reputation, and careers.[109] Framing material holdings as providing ongoing social and economic capital situates the discussion of cultural heritage repatriation and restitution as part of an ongoing practice that is of urgent importance for all practitioners, students, and the museum-going public. This module thus aims to induct students into cultural heritage "communities of practice" within which they can critically engage with the ethical deliberations surrounding cultural heritage holdings today.

Notes

1 We would like to thank the Western Washington University Research and Sponsored Programs office and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences for financial support. We would also like to thank the volume participants and anonymous peer reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions. All errors are the responsibility of the authors.

2 An oft-cited flashpoint for this debate was the New York Times profile of classicist Dan-el Padilla Peralta by Rachel Poser (2021), which generated considerable response from scholars and the public.

3 See, for example, Haley 1993; Yung 2018; Rankine 2019; Singh Dhindsa 2020; Eccleston and Padilla Peralta 2022; Coleman 2023. See Heath-Stout et al. (2023) for discussion and supporting references related to the high barriers for participation created by fieldwork costs, harassment, ableism, and racism. Initiatives promoting broader student access and the amplification of minoritised voices have increasingly sought to remedy these inequities (e.g., microgrants from the Sportula and the Black Trowel Collective); however, considerable disparities remain (see Heath-Stout 2020; Heath-Stout et al. 2023).

4 See, for example, Hamilton-Honey 2022.

5 Haley 1993; Yung 2018; Rankine 2019; Singh Dhindsa 2020; Poser 2021; Eccleston and Padilla Peralta 2022; Coleman 2023. This reflexive critique must also examine the harm created in pushing for diverse participation within the field without meaningfully interrogating its racism and "epistemic injustice," which equates to "using people of color as battering rams to knock down barriers that we didn't erect, at an emotional cost that you don't have to pay" (Yung 2018).

6 For critique of the term "Western Civilization," see Appiah 2016; Futo Kennedy 2023.

7 Dyson 1998; Díaz-Andreu García 2007; Giblin et al. 2019; Stevenson 2022; Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022; Abd el-Gawad and Rogers, this volume. The term "holdings" used here follows Bodenstein and Otiou, which "in no way qualifies the nature of the things referred to" but rather "their state as kept collections, which has become problematic due to the conditions in which they were taken at some point in their trajectories" (2022, 1).

8 The political role of the "canon" in securing cultural and institutional authority has been emphasised by Gayatri Spivak, who argues that "canons secure institutes as institutions secure canons" (2008, 304). For a discussion of bias and politicisation in the creation of reproductions and plaster casts, see Durgun 2021; Tayiana Maina and Moiloa 2022; Gallart Marqués, this volume.

9 https://wp.wwu.edu/ancientworldin3d/

10 Coates 2019; Lucarelli 2023.

11 See Hill, this volume, for a discussion of Critical Race Theory and strategies such as counter-storytelling. Giblin et al. (2019) advocate for object-based narratives that centre "explicit, critically reflective narratives about colonialism, colonial collecting and colonial legacies" (474). See also the contributions in Thum et al. 2024 (especially those by Abd el-Gawad et al., Jiménez and Fogarty, Minor et al., and Thum and Miller Brown).

12 WWU is situated on the ancestral homelands of the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe.

13 The student body is comprised of approximately 30% students of colour and approximately 25–30% of the undergraduate population are first-generation university students (based on the 2023–2024 undergraduate class; https://bpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/wp.wwu.edu/dist/d/4572/files/2024/01/CDS_2023-2024_-6fd2b901d4a92a69.pdf).

14 In-class testing of the Writing and Numismatics modules were undertaken in five classes between Winter 2020 and Spring 2023 (IRB approval # 3455EX20). A report on the results is currently in preparation.

15 Teaching modules and links to 3D models can be found here: https://wp.wwu.edu/ancientworldin3d/teaching/. For an expanded discussion of the numismatic module, see also Johnston et al. 2022.

16 The "Access for Who?" podcast produced by *Open Restitution Africa* (https://africandigitalheritage.org/access-for-who-a-podcast-on-digital-restitution/) provides a comprehensive overview of the potential problems associated with the uncritical production and distribution of digital reproductions. See also Isaac 2015; Dennis 2020.

17 See Michael (2006) and Fink (2003a) for an overview of active learning as part of student-centred instruction.

18 See Dewey (1939, 7) for early espousal of the benefits of experience in education.
19 Michael 2006, 160. This differs from traditional cognitive methods that view learning as a transaction between teacher and student through which information is deposited in the minds of passive learners (e.g., Freire's "Banking Model" of education; Freire 1970). See Biggs and Tang (2011, 22) for an overview of various constructivist methods (e.g., individual, social, cognitive, and postmodern methods).
20 Novak and Gowin 1984, 7; Michael 2006, 160.
21 Fink 2003b, 103–106; Bovill et al. 2011, 134. This extends learning beyond declarative knowledge (learning "what") to procedural knowledge (learning "how"; Michael 2006, 161).
22 Bates 2015, 80. Information processing can include a variety of activities, including comparison, generalisation, enumeration, and classification (Mayer 2009, 68). For these processes to succeed, educators must explicitly scaffold learning experiences around clear learning goals.
23 Brown et al. 1988, 32.
24 Bovill et al. 2011, 134.
25 Michael 2006, referencing Bloom 1956.
26 Stein et al. 2006, 239–41. Learning in this paradigm takes place when information connects meaningfully to the understanding and experiences of the learners (Stein et al. 2006, 240).
27 Stein et al. 2006, 240. This builds on Brown et al.'s (1988) notion of "cognitive apprenticeship," that views learning as embedded in activity and situated in the social and physical contexts of learning (1988, 32).
28 Brown et al. 1989, 33; Stein et al. 2006, 254. This reflects an important distinction between the process of learning about the inquiry of others and learning to engage in inquiry and construct knowledge (Fink 2003b, 52). Kirschner et al. (2006, 83) highlight the important caveat that teachers must distinguish between a disciplinary epistemology and the pedagogy for teaching or learning a discipline.
29 Michael 2006, 161; also Bain 2004.
30 Brown et al. 1988, 40; Gardner 1994, 20; Kuh et al. 2005. For an overview of collaborative learning techniques, see Fink 2003a, 17–20; Michael 2006, 163; Schunk 2020, 335–36.
31 Gardiner 1994, 20.
32 Brown et al. 1988, 40.
33 See Lewis (2019) for a discussion of virtual learning environments for collaborative text analysis and annotation.
34 See Funke et al., this volume, for an example of undergraduate student participation in knowledge production and public outreach using legacy collections study.
35 hooks 2003, 41. This principle follows the teaching of Black feminist leaders like bell hooks, who explains that her pedagogical practices, which "have emerged from the mutually illuminating interplay of anticolonial, critical, and feminist pedagogies" (hooks 1994, 10), position education as "the practice of freedom" (hooks 1994, 13).
36 hooks 1994, 37; Freire 1994, 49; Surface-Evans 2020. Hamilakis (2004, 287) argues that archaeological pedagogy is a part of the field "cultural politics," which he defines as a "contested domain, a public sphere where knowledges, views and perceptions on the past and the present are debated and contested, or valorized, reproduced, and legitimized."
37 Fung 2016.
38 Gardiner 1994, iii.
39 Fink 2003a.
40 Cognitive goals of this type are often referred to as "fact-oriented" or "memory" learning, which has been critiqued as being "of limited value to either (the students) or society" (Gardiner 1994, 5).

41 Fink 2003a, 29.
42 Fink 2003a, 33. The neoliberal restructuring of post-secondary education around vocational training has been frequently linked to a covert "depoliticization of education," which ignores the reality that "education requires technical, scientific, and professional development as much as it does dreams and utopia" (Freire 1998, 43).
43 Fink 2003b, 57.
44 Olson and Caraher 2015; Garstki 2017; Cooper 2019; Natoli and Hunt 2019; Heath 2020; Dennis 2020; Crymble 2021.
45 See, for example, Isaac 2015; Khunti 2018; Dennis 2020; Garstki et al. 2020; Tayiana Maina and Moiloa 2022; Lucarelli 2023.
46 Isaac 2015, 2021; Di Giuseppantonio Di Franco 2015; Garstki 2017; Jones et al. 2018; Garstki et al. 2020; Durgun 2021; Lucarelli 2023.
47 Garstki 2017, 733–38; Dennis 2020; Isaac 2021. See Garstki et al. (2020) for a discussion of terminology related to 3D reproductions, including "digital artifact," "digital surrogate," "digital facsimile," and "digital reproduction." Greenberg and Hamilakis (2022, especially 14–22) highlight the colonial bias of archaeologists, antiquarians, and travellers who created digital renderings of contemporary landscapes that depicted them as monumental ruins devoid of inhabitants (i.e., as "a *terra nullius*, a land empty of people, and thus fair game for conquest and colonization," 2022, 15); see also Abd el-Gawad, this volume.
48 See Khunti 2018; Garstki et al. 2020; Abd el-Gawad, this volume. Garstki et al. (2020, 277–80) discusses several examples of cultural heritage preservation through digital methods in the case of losses outside of warfare or deliberate destruction, such as the Google Arts & Culture virtual tour of Brazil's Museu Nacional in Rio de Janeiro and the use of 3D scanning data for the reconstruction of Notre-Dame, both of which suffered heavy damage due fire.
49 Khunti (2018, 5–6) also critiques the "Disneyfication" of the reconstructions of Palmyra's Arch of Triumph resulting from the use of low-resolution tourist photos as source material, leading to important loss of detail, as well as inaccuracies in scale and construction materials.
50 Khunti 2018, 2–3.
51 See Stevenson (2022, 39) for a critique of this study.
52 Infra nos. 67–75. See also Garstki et al. 2020; Stevenson 2022, 39.
53 Stevenson 2022, 39.
54 Isaac 2015, 2021; Samaroudi and Exchavarria 2019; Durgun 2021. For effective models of community-engaged methods, see Jones et al. 2018; Abd el-Gawad and Stevenson 2021.
55 Abd el-Gawad, this volume.
56 Digital divides can impact end users through unequal access to high-speed broadband and technology. It can also impact cultural heritage institutions through access to funding, digitisation technologies, and server capacity (see Tayiana Maina and Moiloa 2022). Digital divides have also significantly impacted education, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (see the 2023 report, *An Ed-Tech Tragedy?,* by UNESCO: https://www.unesco.org/en/digital-education/ed-tech-tragedy).
57 Jones et al. 2018, 336.
58 Garstki 2017, 730. This idea of "pastness" as a reflection of an object's antiquity builds on Walter Benjamin's influential idea of the "aura" emitted by cultural heritage (see Rabinowitz in Olson and Caraher 2015, citing Benjamin *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, 1968, 223).
59 Neumüller et al. 2014, 119. On the benefits of "haptic" learning, see Cooper 2019, 444–47; Garstki et al. 2020, 264; Minor et al. 2024; and Nofal et al. 2024.
60 Matthews 2017, 1–2.

61 Geismar 2018, 1. For the benefits of a material-oriented perspective, see Geismar 2018, 33–38; Jiménez and Fogarty 2024; Thum and Miller Brown 2024.
62 The Appendix includes the learning objects, resources, and sample assignment worksheets..
63 For technological specifications, including the 3D modeling software, printer, and filaments used, see the Ancient World in 3D project website (https://wp.wwu.edu/ancientworldin3d/3d-models/).
64 Numerous projects (e.g., Scan the World) and institutions (e.g., British Museum, Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History) have made 3D scans of some holdings available through institutional platforms and sites like Sketchfab and MyMiniFactory.
65 An excellent field trip worksheet for museum visits is available through the Monument Lab: https://monumentlab.com/projects/field-trip-museums.
66 An example activity can be found in Funke et al., this volume.
67 Atalay 2006, 282. See also Giblin et al. 2019; Rogers, this volume.
68 This latter point is an important part of decolonial practice that views knowledge as situated, necessitating a reflexive critique of "the settler colonial context where one resides and how that inhabitation is implicated in settler colonialism" (Tuck and Yang 2012, 29) and one's obligation based in this emplacement (Liboirin 2021, 146). This includes the acknowledgement of the "specific critiques and concerns of Indigenous people and descendent populations" (Atalay 2008, 34). See also Abd el-Gawad and Gallart Marqués, this volume.
69 The term "postcolonial" has also been critiqued for its failure to bring about meaningful decolonisation, as well as the origins of the employment of the term in colonial contexts in which it "doesn't strive to undo colonialism but rather to remake it and subvert it" (Tuck and Yang 2012, 19). Instead, Yang (la paperson 2017, xxi–xxii) suggests appending the + glyph to the term to avoid insinuating that colonialism has ended and to instead create opportunities for "reanalyzing colonial and decolonial activities."
70 Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2005, 385. See also Watkins 2000, 172; Atalay 2006, 280; Atalay 2008; Surface-Evans 2020. The specification of "dominant" western science follows Liboirin (2021, 20–1), who notes the need to maintain a focus on power relations while acknowledging that not all forms of western science are afforded positions of dominance.
71 Ferris 2003, 155–56.
72 Schneider and Hayes 2020, 128–29; Abd el-Gawad, this volume; Abd el-Gawad et al. 2024.
73 hooks 2003, 127–31; Atalay 2006, 280; Atalay 2008; Lyons and Supernant 2020; Surface-Evans 2020.
74 Tuhiwa Smith 1999, 28–36, 68–79. See also Futo Kennedy 2023.
75 Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 71.
76 Dyson 1998; Brodie et al. 2001; Díaz-Andreu García 2007; Hanna 2020; Abd el-Gawad and Stevenson 2021; Stevenson 2022; Greenberg and Hamilakis 2022. Gonzalez et al., this volume, documents the history of dispersal of Antioch Mosaics.
77 Chippindale and Gill 2000; Chippindale et al. 2001; Brodie et al. 2013; Mackenzie et al. 2019; Brodie et al. 2022; Stevenson 2022.
78 Renfrew 2000, 2006; Tubb 2007, 2012. Some archaeologists, however, maintain that unprovenanced objects hold inherent value and their omission from research unnecessarily censors scholarship (Boardman 2006, 42, 44–46).
79 Tubb specifically admonishes the museum curators and conservators that accept unprovenanced material, which both legitimises them and potentially leads to information loss about material origins when such materials are conserved (Tubb 2007, 9). For a discussion of the collecting practices at the J. Paul Getty Museum as an example of "museum malfeasance," see Brodie and Bowman Proulx 2013.

80 For an overview of the "safe haven" justification for purchasing unprovenanced material, see Kersel 2016.
81 Philippe de Montebello, formerly of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, warns against inflexible policies towards unprovenanced material that may serve to drive the art market underground, which could then "compound the loss from looting by helping the objects disappear" (de Montebello 2009, 58–59).
82 Chippendale and Gill (2000) provide an excellent example of an empirical examination of object provenance in newly displayed collections, demonstrating the "dismaying picture" of collecting practices for classical antiquities, in which the "overwhelming majority have no declared or credible findspots and simply surface as orphans without history" (2000, 463). Research consortiums like Trafficking Culture (https://traffickingculture.org/), the Antiquities Coalition (https://taskforce.theantiquitiescoalition.org/), and the Antiquities Trafficking and Heritage Anthropology Research Project (https://atharproject.org/) provide significant contributions towards the documentation of looting and the recovery of stolen cultural heritage.
83 For the relationship between looting and the antiquities market, see Brodie et al. 2022.
84 For definitions of provenance and provenience, see Chippendale et al. 2001, 9–11.
85 Chippendale and Gill (2000, 463) estimate that as much as 85% of the funerary record of the Early Bronze Age Cyclades has been lost through looting that has targeted these figurines.
86 Renfrew 2017; Devlin 2022.
87 Atalay et al. 2017; Khunti 2018; Lyons and Supernant 2020; Abd el-Gawad and Stevenson 2021; Abd el-Gawad et al. 2024.
88 A recent example includes the announcement in May 2023 by Max Hollein, director of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, of four new initiatives related to the institution's collecting policies, including the hiring of additional provenance specialists.
89 The return of cultural heritage can take different forms, including the return of an object to an individual legitimate owner (e.g., the return of paintings stolen during WWII), and the repatriation of an object to a modern state or community (Bodenstein and Otiou 2022, 1).
90 An entire episode of *Last Week Tonight* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJPLiT-1kCSM&rco=1) was dedicated to cultural heritage repatriation, including segments that focused on the displacement of the Parthenon Marbles and the Benin Bronzes.
91 Examples include the repatriation of Benin Bronzes by France (https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/11/9/france-hands-back-26-treasures-looted-from-benin), Germany (https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/15/benin-bronzes-go-on-last-exhibition-in-berlin-before-repatriation), and the United States (https://www.si.edu/newsdesk/releases/smithsonian-returns-29-benin-bronzes-national-commission-museums-and-monuments), and the repatriation of the Parthenon Marbles by the Vatican (https://apnews.com/article/parthenon-vatican-return-marble-sculptures-61904ad33c9c8edf182f65c352a52829).
92 Bodenstein and Otiou 2022, 2. See also Giblin et al. 2019.
93 Samaroudi and Rodriguez Exchavarria 2019; Durgun 2021; Lucarelli 2023.
94 Isaac 2015, 2021; Samaroudi and Rodriguez Exchavarria 2019; Durgun 2021. Isaac (2021) discusses numerous other examples relating to the 3D printing of Native American holdings as part of repatriation efforts within the Smithsonian, with important discussion of the community-driven approaches to holdings and their varied social identities and the people-like aspects of objects.
95 Tayiana Maina and Moiloa 2022, Episode 4, 29:57. As noted by Sarah Bond, "no matter how many manuscripts we digitize and make available online or 3D scans we create of the Parthenon frieze, they are not a replacement for repatriation" (Bond 2018).
96 Samaroudi and Rodriguez Exchavarria 2019.
97 Dennis 2020; Durgun 2021; Tayiana Maina and Moiloa 2022; Lucarelli 2023.

98 Bond 2021. On "digital colonialism," see Geismar 2018; Khunti 2018; Dennis 2020; Durgun 2021.
99 See the discussion of the Nefertiti bust in episode 3 of Tayiana Maina and Moiloa 2022. See also Abd el-Gawad et al. 2024; Minor et al. 2024; and Walsh and Jewell 2024.
100 Samaroudi and Rodriguez Exchavarria 2019.
101 Geismar 2018; Samaroudi and Rodriguez Exchavarria 2019; Bond 2021; Lucarelli 2023.
102 Geismar (2018, 110–11) explains that the source of the scan was likely a higher-resolution scan commissioned by the museum but not made available to the public.
103 Artist statement by Nora Al-Badri and Jan Nikolai Nelles (https://aksioma.org/the.other.nefertiti).
104 Geismar 2018; Hanna 2020; Bond 2021.
105 Stevenson 2022, 40.
106 Garstki 2017, 730.
107 Supra nos. 67–75.
108 Durgun 2021; Tayiana Maina and Moiloa 2022 (especially episodes 3 and 4).
109 Colwell-Chanthaphonh et al. 2010, 230; Minor et al. 2024; Abd el-Gawad et al. 2024. The social and economic capital resulting from colonial extraction and settler practices should be viewed as ongoing processes, not just events relegated to the past (Yang 2017, 4).

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TEACHING THE ANCIENT WORLD WITH REPLICAS

Appendix: Module Plan

3D Prints

- Jasper Heart Scarab, Durham University Oriental Museum inv. EG5270; (Purchased from Hugh Percy, 10th Duke of Northumberland); 3D model by Cole Kelly for Durham University (Sketchfab: https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/heart-scarab-3252dbf0af2b4d5c8a58797eec2a8102)
- Cycladic Marble Head, ca. 2700–2500 BCE (Met. Museum inv. 64.246: https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/255176); 3D model by Scan the World: https://www.myminifactory.com/object/3d-print-head-of-a-woman-28673
- Cycladic Figurine, Plastiras Type ca. 3000–2800 BCE (British Museum inv. 1890,0921.5: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1890-0921-5); 3D model made by the British Museum (SketchFab: https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/cycladic-figurine-948a37048c3548e29f3ac0a807813418)
- 3D Model of the Bust of Nefertiti made by Scan the World: https://www.myminifactory.com/object/3d-print-bust-of-nefertiti-at-the-egyptian-museum-berlin-2951

Assigned Material

Meeting 1

- Abd el-Gawad, Heba, and Alice Stevenson. "Egypt's Dispersed Heritage: Multi-Directional Storytelling Through Comic Art." *Journal of Social Archaeology*, 21, no. 1 (2021): 121–45. https://doi.org/10.1177/1469605321992929

- PBS "Origin of Everything" Video, The Problem with Museums: https://www.pbs.org/video/the-problem-with-museums-41mbgf/
- "Monument Lab" Podcast, Museums Are Not Neutral: https://monumentlab.com/podcast/museums-are-not-neutral-with-movement-co-founders-la-tanya-s-autry-and-mike-murawski

Meeting 2

- Renfrew, Colin. "Early Cycladic Sculpture: Issues of Provenance, Terminology and Classification." In *Early Cycladic Sculpture in Context*, edited by Colin Renfrew, Marisa Marthari, and Michael J. Boyd, 1–12. London: Oxbow Books, 2017.
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- "Access for Who" Podcast, Digital Collections Pt 1 (https://open.spotify.com/episode/4Pz76LeJRCtMOHIXRh37U7) and Pt 2 (https://open.spotify.com/episode/3c2AoSjygtITfjbBk6nBQi)

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- Bond, Sarah. "What the 'Nefertiti Hack' Tells Us About Digital Colonialism." *Hyperallergic*, May 24, 2021. https://hyperallergic.com/647998/what-the-nefertiti-hack-tells-us-about-digital-colonialism/.
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- Tyldesley, Joyce. *Nefertiti's Face: The Creation of an Icon*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv6sj6tx.

- Podcast: Egypt's Dispersed Heritage Project, A podcast with Samira Ahmed, Margaret Maitland, Heba Abd el Gawad, and Alice Stevenson: https://www.nms.ac.uk/collections-research/our-research/current-research/egypt-s-d
- Podcast: "Sapiens" Podcast, Repatriation Is Our Future: https://www.sapiens.org/archaeology/repatriation-african-american-remains/
- Video: Reclaiming the Ancestors: Indigenous and Black Perspectives on Repatriation, Human Rights, and Justice (https://www.sapiens.org/archaeology/reclaiming-the-ancestors/). Sapiens panel discussion sponsored by the Society of Black Archaeologists (https://www.societyofblackarchaeologists.com/) and the Indigenous Archaeology Collective (https://x.com/indigarchs?lang=en)
- Video: "Your Mummies, Their Ancestors? Caring for and about Ancient Egyptian Human Remains" (https://everydayorientalism.wordpress.com/2020/07/22/eotalks-your-mummies-their-ancestors-caring-for-and-about-ancient-egyptian-human-remains/). Sponsored by Everyday Orientalism (https://everydayorientalism.wordpress.com/about/).

Learning Objectives

Following L. Dee Fink's Taxonomy of Significant Learning (*Creating Significant Learning Experiences*, 2003), the learning objectives include both cognitive and affective goals, designed to situate the module learning within broader course content and discussions. These objectives are presented to the students at the beginning of the module in order to signpost learning outcomes and stimulate a metacognitive awareness of the learning process.

Foundational Knowledge: understand and remember the basic histories of exploration and cultural heritage extraction in the ancient Mediterranean, including changing legal and ethical debates related to cultural heritage and antiquities legislation;

Application: learn how to evaluate 3D models as tools for visualisation and analysis, including the potential benefits and drawbacks. Develop critical analytical skills in evaluating ancient objects and museum holdings, including the types of information recorded and methods used for object study and provenance documentation;

Integration: identify and critically evaluate the ways in which power and ideology are reflected in cultural heritage collecting and protection practices in different times and places;

Human Dimension: develop a better awareness of collecting practices and the impact of these practices on cultural heritage and source communities, particularly in relation to who has traditionally had access to such objects and whose interests have been served by past collecting practices and modern digitisation efforts;

Caring: care about cultural heritage, its protection, and the ethics of museum and private holdings;

Learning How to Learn: be able to identify useful resources for continued learning about cultural heritage debates in the future and know how to integrate critical historical analysis in future learning.

Module Plan

Meeting 1:

Before beginning the module activity, the learning objectives are outlined to the learners, after which students are given a short lecture on the histories of cultural heritage extraction in the Mediterranean, West Asia, and North Africa. This lecture can be tailored to the course level and topic. Topics addressed include collecting practices and the history of cultural heritage displacement for the places in question, the development of museums or collecting institutions, and major pieces of cultural heritage legislation. Explicit connections are drawn throughout to the assigned material, which address the impact of western dominant notions of ownership, classification, and display.

Following this background presentation, students form groups of 3–4 individuals, and are provided with the collection of printed replicas and Worksheet 1 (to be completed as a group). If students have access to computers, the object inventory pages can be accessed directly, otherwise printed copies can be provided to each group. This part of the activity takes approximately 30–45 minutes and is assessed as a low-stakes assignment graded on a complete/did-not-complete basis. This is followed by discussion together reflecting on the activity and the challenges they faced in studying 3D reproductions and collecting full object information through museum inventories (e.g., what types of information are provided; is information consistent across institutions; are there details missing; are there resources for further research). The materiality of the digital reproductions are also addressed, including types of information lost through the process of reproduction (e.g., weight, material, colour, etc.), as well as an explicit conversation around their experience as an observer (e.g., did the reproduction provide them with a similar/equivalent "thrill of proximity").

Meeting 2:

Students complete Worksheet 2 independently and submit the assignment for assessment (this could be modified to be a group activity completed in class if

students have access to computers). Any of the module's objects could be selected for this activity, though it is recommended that you ensure that the appropriate details are available on the public-facing institutional website in advance. The second in-class meeting focuses on discussion of the ethics of museum holdings today and the paths for future reconciliation and repatriation. Depending on the class structure, this component can be structured as a collective group discussion, or through smaller breakout groups followed by a discussion together.

ANCIENT WORLD IN 3D PROJECT

WORKSHEET 1

Object 1 Name:

Museum Name and number:

Production Date:

Findspot/Provenance:

Dimensions:

Description: (what is the object? what was it used for? how is it decorated?)

Materials: (what is the object made of? where were these materials found? any other relevant information on the materials?)

Production: (where and how was the object made? were any specific techniques used? do we know anything about the craftspeople who made such objects?)

Location: (do we know where the object was found? does this location tell us anything about consumption – for example, was it imported/used/placed in a tomb? do we know what it was found with?)

Provenance: (how did the object end up in the museum where it is currently held?)

Object 2 Name:

Museum Name and number:

Production Date:

Findspot/Provenance:

Dimensions:

Description: (what is the object? what was it used for? how is it decorated?)

Materials: (what is the object made of? where were these materials found? any other relevant information on the materials?)

Production: (where and how was the object made? were any specific techniques used? do we know anything about the craftspeople who made such objects?)

Location: (do we know where the object was found? does this location tell us anything about consumption – for example, was it imported/used/placed in a tomb? do we know what it was found with?)

Provenance: (how did the object end up in the museum where it is currently held?)

Object 3 Name:

Museum Name and number:

Production Date:

Findspot/Provenance:

Dimensions:

Description: (what is the object? what was it used for? how is it decorated?)

Materials: (what is the object made of? where were these materials found? any other relevant information on the materials?)

Production: (where and how was the object made? were any specific techniques used? do we know anything about the craftspeople who made such objects?)

Location: (do we know where the object was found? does this location tell us anything about consumption – for example, was it imported/used/placed in a tomb? do we know what it was found with?)

Provenance: (how did the object end up in the museum where it is currently held?)

ANCIENT WORLD IN 3D PROJECT

WORKSHEET 2

Instructions: select one of the module's objects and answer the following questions.

Museum/Institutional Information:

Who manages and funds the institution? What is the stated mission (of the specific department/unit or broader institution holding it)? How does the object or collection fit within this mission? (200–400 words)

Collection Description:

How large is the collection to which the object belongs? What types of material does it include? When were the materials collected and from where (e.g., what is its provenance)? (200–400 words)

Collection Narrative:

Summarise the narrative description provided for the collection (if there is one; note if there is not). Does it explain how the collection fits within the goals of the institution? (200–400 words)

Collection Navigation:

Is the organisational structure of the collection clear? How easy is it to navigate the design interface? Are there tools built in for lateral searching (e.g., connecting objects of similar type or context)? (200–400 words)

Object/Collection Future:

Is there explicit discussion of repatriation or restitution efforts on behalf of the object or collection? Do they address contested claims? Is there a discussion of consultation with different stakeholders (e.g., descendent communities)? (200–400 words)

10

RESEARCH-DRIVEN PEDAGOGY AND PUBLIC-FACING OUTCOMES

The Antioch Recovery Project[1]

Ella Gonzalez, Danielle Ortiz, and Jennifer Stager

Introduction: Antioch in Context

The Antioch Recovery Project (ARP) is a digital humanities project exploring the ancient, early twentieth century, and modern histories of Antioch-on-the-Orontes (modern Antakya) through a close examination of the extant fragments of its ancient floor mosaics (See Figure 10.1). This project aims to reunite virtually the atomised corpus of mosaic fragments from the site. The current chapter is written by three contributors – Jennifer Stager (principal investigator), Ella Gonzalez (contributor, Phase I: Spring 2020), and Danielle Ortiz (Contributor, Phase II: Fall 2021) – and gives an overview of the project and its associated teaching model. We then explore two specific outputs from Phase I and Phase II, respectively, and offer a model for the way pedagogy and research can mutually support each other. ARP unites fragments, contextualises joins, and disseminates these results to the public to reassemble new, more global narratives from these old stones.

From 1932 to 1939, a Franco-American team (Committee for the Excavation of Antioch-on-the-Orontes), professional staff from across the Middle East, and local labourers excavated Antioch.[2] At that time, the region was part of Syria, which was governed through a French Mandate, a form of temporary oversight government approved by the League of Nations and operating as a legal form of colonial rule in the Middle East.[3] After debate before the League of Nations and discussion in the international press, France ceded the region to Türkiye on June 30, 1939, a concession designed to ensure Türkiye's neutrality in World War II.[4] Antakya remains a border zone between the two countries today. In addition to changing political governance, the region's fortunes have been repeatedly impacted by natural disasters, such as earthquakes. These register in the textual and archaeological records, including evidence of repair in antiquity to mosaic floors after

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FIGURE 10.1 Map of Antakya, Türkiye and its surroundings. Esri ArcGIS.

earthquakes.[5] More recently, on February 6, 2023, Antakya was at the epicentre of a series of devastating earthquakes.[6] Such entangled political and environmental factors frame the contexts within which artists crafted these mosaics for use by Antiochenes and also in which later archaeologists extracted, fragmented, and dispersed them.

Charles Morey at Princeton inaugurated the consortium of US-based institutions that participated in the excavations, motivated by the Art and Archaeology department's history of excavating in Syria and their status as the institutional home of the Christian Art Index, which he founded.[7] The excavators were initially seeking art connected to Antioch's early Christian history, but instead of explicitly and exclusively Christian imagery, they found layers of mosaic floors produced by artists in the 2nd–6th-centuries CE that depicted a variety of themes including images of ancient Greek myths, topography, personifications, animals, sea creatures, hunts, theatre, games, funerary practices, geometric patterns, and *apotropaia* (Figure 10.2).[8]

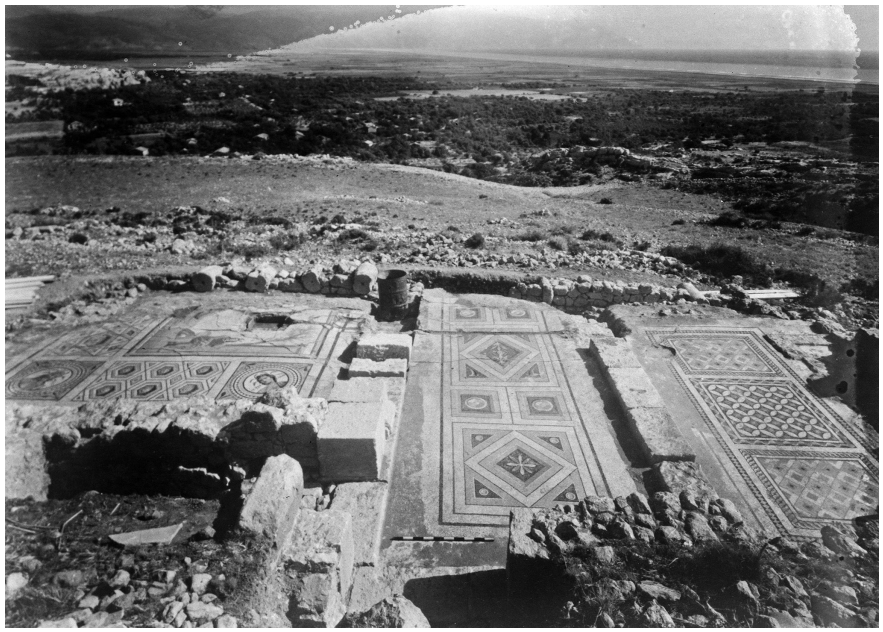

FIGURE 10.2 Excavation view of mosaic floors *in situ*, House of Cilicia and surroundings, Antioch (Antakya Türkiye). August 28, 1937. A-006385. Courtesy of the Antioch Expedition Archive, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University.

Over the course of the excavations, the team cut sections of individual mosaic floors out of the ground – often separating figural and non-figural components from each other and sometimes leaving the latter in the ground.[9] For the fragments they extracted, the team replaced the ancient mortar with modern concrete and rebar and shipped the fragments to institutions affiliated with the excavation team.[10] Per the excavation agreements, they designated 50% of the mosaics to the Syrian Government, 20% to the Musées Nationaux de France, 10% to Princeton University, 10% to the Worcester Art Museum, and 10% to Baltimore City's Antioch Subscription Fund and, by extension, the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA).[11] After the original distribution, political changes, as well as the deaccessioning, gifting, and selling of fragments have further atomised the corpus, which is now distributed across institutions in Cuba, France, Türkiye, and the United States.[12] These initial extractions and distributions and the subsequent de- and re-accessioning of the fragments has rendered them, in Arjun Appadurai's term, "accidental refugees," an interpretive designation that emphasises their contingency and mobility.[13] In classifying museum objects as such, Appadurai contrasts the way they are valued with the dehumanising treatment of human refugees, a

dichotomy relevant to Antioch/Antakya's border zone, across which both ancient and modern refugees have long moved. Working within a similar framework, Ezgi Erol describes the violent dispersal of the Antioch corpus as a "mosaic diaspora," a phrase that marks the medium of mosaic's quality of assemblage and the history of these objects' entanglement with the displacements of people.[14]

A crossroads of both land and sea-based trade, Antakya has remained multilingual and multireligious since antiquity, coming under Greek, Palmyrene, Islamic, Byzantine, Seljuq, Crusader, Mamlūk, Ottoman, Syrian, and Turkish governance.[15] Despite the region's diversity, its mosaic floors – crafted while Antioch was the eastern outpost of the Roman Empire – were initially interpreted through a Eurocentric lens; this flattened the concept of Romanness, erased Antioch's multicultural history, and presented these objects as precursors to a European panel painting tradition – an interpretation amplified for the public in the news.[16] Despite material and functional differences, the excavators interpreted and presented these mosaics to the public as stand-ins that "fill in the gap in the history of ancient painting,"[17] an example of what Miranda Fricker calls hermeneutical epistemic injustice, whereby the "injustice of having some significant area of one's social experience obscured from collective understanding owing to persistent and wide-ranging hermeneutical marginalization … renders the collective hermeneutical resource *structurally prejudiced*."[18] The desire to interpret the mosaic fragments as substitute paintings likely motivated decisions in the field to cut up the floors into quadrilaterals for lifting and transport, and the subsequent choice made by many institutions to display the fragments vertically on walls, like paintings, decisions which have fuelled misinterpretation of these fragments in their diaspora (Figure 10.3).[19]

Reframing the functional craft of mosaic floors as a predecessor to the European panel painting tradition allowed the fragments to be fitted into a western European artistic canon and history. Yet, ancient artists produced these mosaics as floors for use in public and private spaces inhabited by the diverse and multilingual population of the easternmost region of the Roman empire – a population and material culture often marginalised in the study of Graeco-Roman antiquity.[20] This early twentieth-century interpretive history, moreover, has often lingered in museum labels and metadata surrounding the dispersed mosaic fragments.[21] The wide dispersal of the fragments has been a factor in decontextualised interpretations of individual fragments and in the exegeses of Antioch's historical significance. Despite this prevailing interpretation, complex political, religious, linguistic, ecological, and artistic forces have shaped and continue to shape both the region and the reception of these mosaic fragments. Considering this diverse cultural context, ARP analyses how these mosaic fragments – their artists, materials, motifs, inscriptions, and care – contribute to the region's heterogeneity.[22]

To expand the contemporary narratives surrounding the Antioch mosaic corpus, ARP draws inspiration from Andrea De Giorgi and Asa Eger's book *Antioch: A History* (2021), which emphasises the enduring diversity and independence of

FIGURE 10.3 Angela Elliott speaking in front of a mosaic fragment depicting the Abduction of Europa from the House of the Boat of Psyches, installed on the wall of the Antioch Court, Baltimore Museum of Art, 2021.

the region, and Christine Kondoleon's important loan exhibition *Antioch: The Lost Ancient City* (2000), which physically reunited and displayed selected mosaic fragments, including fragments borrowed from the Louvre and Princeton, and travelled to the Worcester Art Museum, the Cleveland Art Museum, and the Baltimore Museum of Art.[23] Noting the expense and logistical complexity of

physically reuniting dispersed fragments, a review of the 2000 exhibition noted that: "[a]fter this year, they [the mosaics] might never be seen together again."[24] Despite these challenges, the reunification of fragments in this exhibition offered a model for the interpretive gains of seeing fragments in relation to each other. Given the success of this exhibition's reunification approach, ARP uses digital tools to visualise past and current relationships between fragments. These tools include a database of over 1,300 images built in JSTOR with backend metadata in Excel, which we continue to update and seek to make open access, ArcGIS mapping software, StoryMaps, Photoshop, Procreate, data visualisation, and audio and visual recordings (Figure 10.4). With these tools, we aim to facilitate the analysis of pieces from the same floor, house, or building complex, which are often housed in different museum collections.[25] In turn, these reunifications highlight the diversity of themes, styles, and materials across the corpus and trace their rhizomatic relations.

In addition, the database of mosaic fragments documents the region's ancient material, cultural, and political connections, while simultaneously forging new relationships in modernity. In collaboration with curators, conservators, and data scientists at Johns Hopkins and nearby institutions, we have formed a Baltimore-based research node that seeks to trace, visualise, and share these connections with the global community of Antioch researchers and the public.

The Antioch Recovery Project: Background and Structure

The city of Baltimore's "Antioch Subscription Fund" contributed financial support to the 1932–1939 excavations of the site. As a result, the Baltimore Museum of Art received over thirty-five mosaic fragments and associated objects from the original distribution of finds from the site allocated to the excavation's supporting institutions, many of which remain on display today. The proximity of the Baltimore mosaics to the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) campus provided the inspiration for ARP's research-driven pedagogical model, which is part of a larger initiative within the Arts and Sciences division at JHU (first the Classics Research Lab and later the Humanities Research Lab initiatives).[26] ARP produces collaborative humanities research using a flipped-classroom approach, organised around the larger research goals of the project and directed by the specialisations and interests of the students enrolled in the course.[27] A typical flipped-classroom practice involves students receiving information asynchronously prior to arriving in class and then devoting classroom time to related, active learning activities, the benefits of which have been well-documented.[28] Similarly, ARP frontloads the historical information concerning ancient Antioch, the 1930s excavations, and the subsequent distribution and displays of mosaic fragments from the site during the first third of the semester, dividing the study of individual historical moments, individual house groups, and work in prior phases of ARP across different students, who share back their knowledge with the group before devoting the remaining weeks to

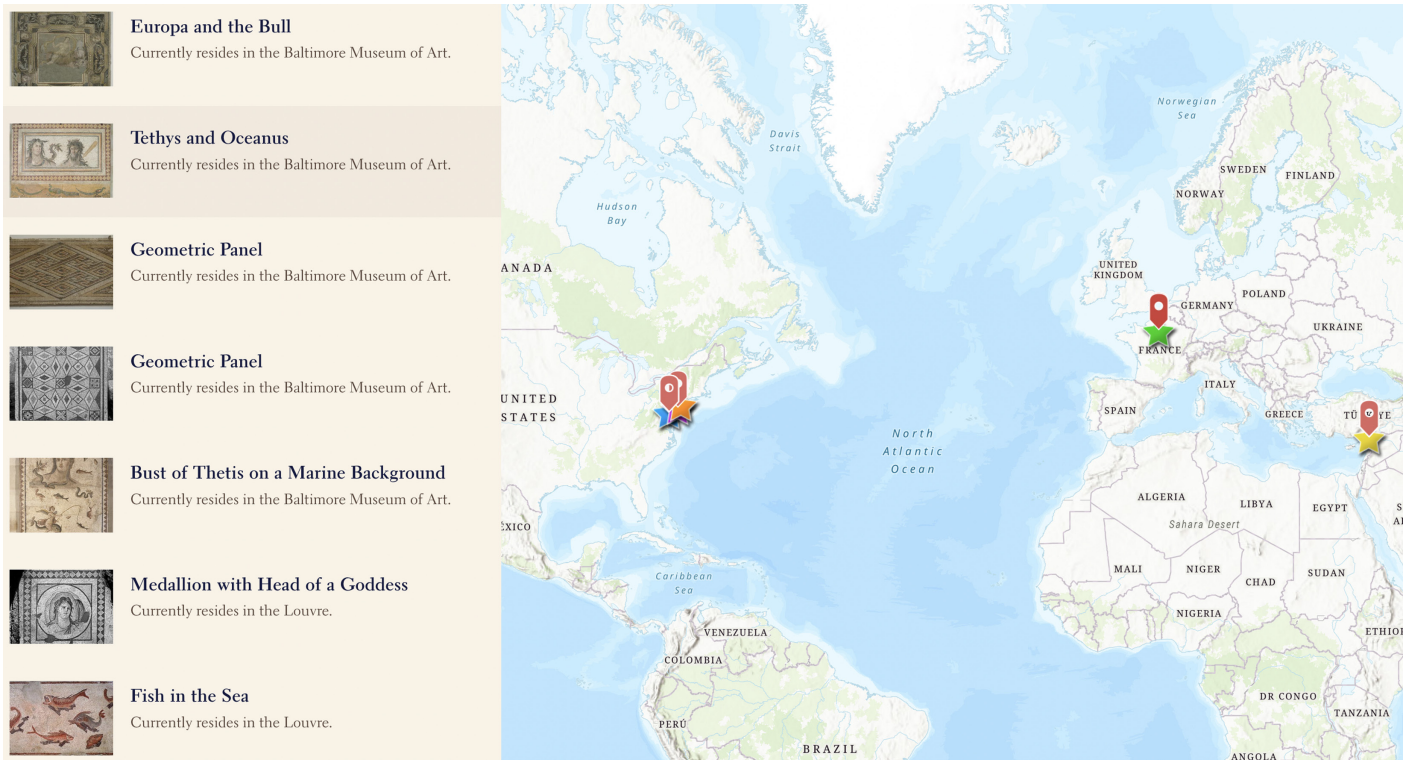

FIGURE 10.4 Map of the movement of mosaic fragments from the House of the Boat of Psyches, distributed to five different institutions in Antakya, Paris, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Princeton. Courtesy: Phoebe Chu and the Antioch Recovery Project.

individual workstreams undertaken in the community space of the lab classroom. This model allows students to build from work undertaken by students in previous phases, just as scholars build from each other's work. Moreover, students can tailor research projects to their interests and existing expertise, build new skills, and share research resources with each other.

With the study of the humanities in North American higher education institutions continuously under threat from political oversight, economic pressures, and an increasing push for students to pre-professionalise, a research-driven teaching model offers a path to expanding humanities research among undergraduates. This model offers students from a range of academic backgrounds (e.g., archaeology, chemistry, classics, engineering, history, history of art, mathematics, near eastern studies, neuroscience, and political science) an opportunity for collaborative practice in humanities research and connects students directly with specialised methodologies and researchers who emphasise the significance of humanistic research in interdisciplinary fields. Students in ARP have explored digital mapping, conservation analysis, spatial reconstructions, mathematical modelling, sensory archaeologies, and museum visitor experiences, often learning new tools, such as ArcGIS, and archival practices.

For example, in Phase I (Spring 2020), Patricia Kolodziejski, a Chemistry major, designed a non-invasive technique in Photoshop to extract modern conservation interventions digitally to reveal the previously obscured gaps in mosaic fragments that had been reconstructed after excavation with modern plaster painted with polychrome squares to mimic tesserae.[29] Then, in Phase II (Fall 2021), we built on Kolodziejski's technique to document similar modern conservation interventions on several mosaic fragments in the BMA collection.

Students in the same class then introduced the slider feature in ArcGIS StoryMaps to move easily between photographs of mosaics; first showcasing the mosaics in their altered state – after conservators filled in the losses with painted tesserae – then sliding the image to demonstrate the state of the mosaics without modern additions (Figure 10.5).[30] This approach quickly visualises what has been added in modernity, distinguishing those sections from the ancient stone tesserae.

Since 2020, ARP has (1) built a image database in JSTOR of the extant mosaic fragments; (2) sorted these by their ancient architectural structures ("House Groups") and thereby reuniting the dispersed fragments; (3) where possible, linked each house group with their ancient latitude and longitude provided to us by the Antioch Region GIS Survey; and (4) mapped contemporary locations of the fragments in ArcGIS.[31] This map is publicly visible, shareable, and can be edited and updated by the ARP team as new information about additional fragments or their movements emerges.[32]

In contrast to the open-access nature of the ArcGIS map, the over thirteen hundred images in ARP's JSTOR database remain subscription based, due to the permission terms under which the respective institutions shared their images. The project continues to negotiate the tension between (often larger) institutions whose

FIGURE 10.5 Still of image slider allowing movement between a photograph of the mosaic fragment of the Abduction of Europa as it now appears, and an earlier photograph taken before conservation. November 17, 2021. Courtesy: Phoebe Chu, the Antioch Recovery Project, and the Princeton Archaeological Archives.

collections are open-access and institutions whose collections are not. We have made concessions where possible; for example, where a contemporary colour photograph is not available for public circulation, we have substituted a black-and-white photograph from the Princeton Archive.[33] In Phase III, we are re-negotiating the original image-sharing terms with each institution, emphasising the public-facing nature of the project and the benefits of making even low-resolution versions of their images available to the public and the global community of Antioch researchers. The project remains committed to disseminating our findings widely and in different modalities, such as audio recordings, written blog posts, and data visualisations.[34]

In the following sections, Ella Gonzalez first presents the ArcGIS map of known mosaic fragments, and then Danielle Ortiz discusses a virtual reconstruction of the Hall of Philia mosaic. As these two examples demonstrate, ARP collapses artificial distinctions between teaching and research. By sharing findings with the global Antioch community and with a non-specialist public, we can make real-time adjustments to our data based on new inputs from wide-ranging sources, draw attention to fragments tucked away in less accessible collections, and expand the narrative that surrounds this corpus of mosaics.

Mapping Antioch: An Introduction

In Spring 2020, during the first phase of ARP, Maya Kahane and I (Ella Gonzalez) created a public-facing map using ArcGIS to document all known locations of extant mosaic fragments from the ancient city of Antioch and its surroundings.[35] Our research was motivated by the absence of a singular source containing the locations of all known Antioch mosaic fragments. The wide dispersal of the mosaic fragments has inhibited both an analysis of the relationship between different parts as well as a synthetic study of the motifs and materials within the corpus. Although earlier physical catalogues of the fragments exist, such as Fatih Cimok's *Antioch Mosaics: A Corpus* (2000), they cannot be easily updated or expanded upon as research rapidly emerges on a global scale. Our digital map, however, is a living document and can be easily edited by the ARP team when new information is made available. Since releasing it in May 2020 on the project's website and on the social media platform X (previously Twitter), we have continued to add fragments and update the affiliation of individual fragments as scholars share new information with us. To record our process, we also produced an accompanying StoryMap, allowing others to understand how we documented the mosaic fragments and what information the map now communicates. Our map is meant to be an easy, one-stop guide for Antioch mosaic researchers to locate related fragments, visualise ancient connections through contextual evidence, and trace the object biographies of each displaced fragment.

Thanks to the earlier efforts of Christine Kondoleon and the many scholars working on mosaics in general, the Antioch mosaics specifically, and the site of ancient Antioch more broadly, we compiled a list of approximately 33 (potentially 34) repositories containing mosaic fragments from ancient Antioch.[36] In our compilation of repositories, we discovered that the Antioch mosaics are dispersed across at least 20 states (including Washington D.C.) and four countries (the United States, Türkiye, France, and potentially Cuba). A three-stage plan was then developed to organise the project: first, we compiled information on the mosaic repositories; second, we inputted our collective data into a spreadsheet; and third, we created a digital map of the current mosaic locations using the mapping software ArcGIS Online.[37] To carry out this research, we received training in ArcGIS – a new-to-us tool – from the library's data services team.[38] Although other students in the class did not undertake the same ArcGIS training, we were able to share the benefits of employing this mapping tool for work in the humanities with our classmates, as well as the broader public through a discussion of its research potential on our StoryMaps. These digital tools proved to be especially useful with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and mid-semester campus shutdown, a situation that underscored our collective connections while requiring us to find new ways of working together while apart.

Stage 1: Compiling Information on Antioch Mosaic Repositories

In our comprehensive, granular, and easily updatable ArcGIS map, we identify the current locations of all known Antioch mosaics, indicate their specific institutions,

document the individual fragments in each collection, and provide links to the collection websites. To accomplish this, we first compiled information from the existing Antioch mosaic repositories. As an initial data set for our map, we used a graphic published in Cimok (2000) that indicated the basic geographic locations of several extant Antioch mosaics, although this resource does not always indicate the institution or museum in which these mosaics are located or how many fragments each repository contains.[39] Because Cimok's map was published over 20 years ago, we verified and updated the locations of various fragments and added those not marked on Cimok's map. An even older source, Frances F. Jones' 1981 article "Antioch Mosaics in Princeton," allowed us to produce a more granular graph, since it provided specific repositories, albeit limited to those in the United States.[40]

We also consulted museum archival documents and newspaper clippings from the 1930s to track and confirm the distribution and current locations of the mosaics.[41] To map these, we compiled a list of all the mosaics in Cimok, Jones, and individual news articles, and cross-checked them with each institution's online collections page, if available, or by telephone when the object did not appear in the museum's virtual catalogue. When we were building the map, the Louvre had yet to make its entire collection publicly available, making it difficult to verify the full number of fragments in their collection, but we have since been able to update this information. The Hatay Archaeological Museum also does not currently have a searchable collections' website and, following the devastating February 2023 earthquakes in the region, its collection has been moved temporarily into storage, further separating these fragments from the larger corpus. We used earlier print documentation and photographs of the museum's installation, taken in 2021 and shared with the project by Asa Eger and Amy Miranda, to confirm the mosaic fragments in that collection and update the map. We hope to partner with the museum to incorporate professional photographs of the fragments in their collection. A separate workstream in Phase III (Fall 2023) involved updating the metadata of our Artstor/JSTOR image database and as a result of this process, we have adjusted the map where additional fragments or institutional information have surfaced.

Stages 2 and 3: Inputting Collected Data into Google Sheets and Visualising our Data in ArcGIS Online

For Stages 2 and 3, we input our collected data into Google Sheets and then designed a map on ArcGIS Online. We first listed each museum/institution in the United States, Cuba, France, and Türkiye with Antioch mosaic fragments in their collections and used Google Maps to find the exact longitude and latitude coordinates for each institution's location. We then added individual links both to each institution's website and to images of each museum or institution. We deliberately chose not to include photos of each mosaic, in part to avoid visual

crowding; this choice also reflects a lack of open-access digitisation of all images of the mosaics.

As we compiled our list, we faced another challenge: a vertiginous world of fragments and the somewhat futile task of trying to take inventory of the dispersed corpus.[42] We initially intended to list the number of mosaics in each repository, however this quickly revealed itself to be an onerous task due to the vast discrepancies in how the mosaics are "counted" depending on what institution they are located in and where their priorities, with respect to the mosaics, lie. As individual researchers identify fragments (and their institutions), the map provides a central location to visualise them, one that can be updated as new information becomes available and allowing for iterative work and collaboration. For example, a fragment of a floor mosaic depicting theatre masks from Room Two of the "House of the Mysteries of Isis" is now in the collection of the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut, and there is a discrepancy in the way it is counted and published.[43] According to Jones' article and archival material from the excavation, this floor mosaic is counted as two separate pieces – A and B – that comprise a whole. In the Wadsworth Atheneum collection, however, the disparate parts are united, where they are pictured and catalogued as one mosaic with a single accession number. Given the inconsistencies in the counting of these fragments across displaying institutions, we did not include the number of mosaics in each museum collection on our map, nor did we include how many mosaic fragments came from the same original whole; a specialised researcher, however, could use our map and collection of research to compile this data from one comprehensive and frequently updated source.

In the final stage of our research, we exported our data from Google Sheets into ArcGIS Online. We tinkered with the visuals and display options to produce the map seen here (Figure 10.6).

When you click on a location on the map, you will be able to find the following information: (1) the city; (2) the museum/institution in which the mosaic fragments are housed; (3) a link to the museum/institution website; (4) a list of mosaics in their collection; and (5) a picture of the institution.

Steps Forward: Investigating the Mosaic of the Buffet Supper

One of our most exciting updates is the addition to the map of (still missing) Antioch mosaic fragments in Cuba, which were not included in Cimok's graph. Documentation concerning the mosaics is as widely dispersed as the fragments themselves, but much of it can be found at the Archaeological Archives at Princeton. During Phase I (2020), I (Ella Gonzalez) discovered a find card digitised in the Princeton Archaeological Archives associated with a floor from the "House of the Buffet Supper" indicating that fragments from this house were sold to "Villa Nova College, Havana" in 1956 (Figure 10.7).[44]

The institution referenced as "Villa Nova College, Havana" in the find card was more popularly known as the Universidad Católica de Santo Tomás de Villanueva

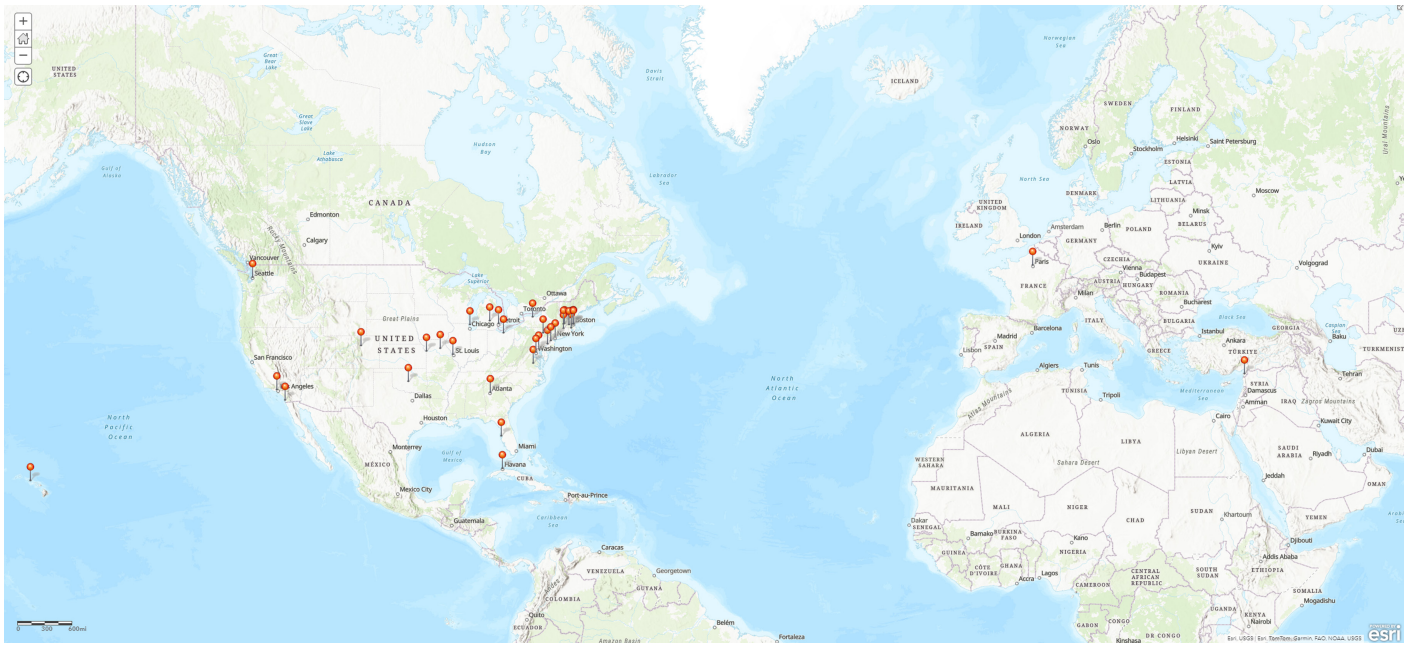

FIGURE 10.6 Antioch Mosaics Distribution Map. Created in ArcGIS by Ella Gonzalez and Maya Kahane in 2020 and continuously updated by members of The Antioch Recovery Project.

FIGURE 10.7 Excavation view of central mosaic panel in Room B5 with large octagon, House of the Buffet Supper; July 8, 1937; Mosaic a962-M122a-e. Courtesy of the Antioch Expedition Archive, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University.

(St. Thomas of Villanova), founded in 1946 but no longer in operation after the Castro government expelled the Augustinians from Cuba in 1961.[45] The former location of St. Thomas of Villanova is now the present-day Instituto Tecnológico de Química "Playa Girón." Furthermore, many of the Villanova faculty and staff expelled by Castro founded St. Thomas University in Florida.[46] While we have confirmed that the mosaic fragments did arrive on the Villanova campus, we do not know if they were fully installed, if they were moved to the university to Florida, or if they remain *in situ* in Havana as part of the Playa Girón campus. Although the research is still ongoing and the current location of these fragments has not yet been confirmed, these mosaic fragments may be in one of these places.

Letters related to the sale of the mosaic from Princeton to Cuba help clarify some of the initial reasons for their acquisition of it.[47] The correspondence spans from the Summer 1955 to January 1956, when the mosaic fragments were finally transferred to Cuba,[48] and is largely between two men: Richard Stillwell, an archaeologist and professor at Princeton from 1925 to 1967, and Eugenio Batista, a Cuban architect and professor, who was a Princeton alumnus (MFA Architecture 1930) and Dean of the School of Architecture at Villanova in the 1950s.

Batista's interest in purchasing the five fragments from the "House of the Buffet Supper" began when he spotted the mosaics in the architecture laboratory at Princeton University in the summer of 1954. These five fragments, which comprise one larger complete mosaic from Room B5, are geometric in design and bear a central panel with vegetal and foliate motifs, including what look to be grapes radiating from a vessel. Additional fragments from the same house depicting figural motifs, including the eponymous "buffet supper" of eggs, pigs' feet, artichokes, fish, bread, and other foods, are currently in the Hatay.

Stillwell approved the sale to Villanova, and correspondence with administrators at Villanova – notably Father Lorenzo M. Spiralli, the founder, Father John Kelly, Vice-President and later President, and Father Charles Berry, Director of the School of Architecture – repeatedly mention a wish to publicise the sale, even offering to send pictures of the mosaic and its installation to Princeton. In his letters, Batista indicates that he planned to put the mosaics temporarily against a wall at the entrance of Villanova's library and museum building, and later to set them in the vestibule floor of the School of Architecture.

Building from the work of uncovering these correspondences and attempts to track the present-day location of these mosaic fragments in Phase I (Spring 2020), students in Phase III (Fall 2023) continued to search for these fragments, tracing them to a photograph taken on the Villanova campus in Havana in a 1957 yearbook, digitised and shared on the St. Thomas website. Morgan Brown translated the accompanying Spanish text to confirm that the objects pictured leaning against a wall are the mosaic fragments.[49] As part of a larger exploration of the transport of Antioch mosaics, Gabriella Hu mapped the shipping records for the Villanova fragments in ArcGIS, drawing on documents in the Princeton Archive.[50] These two workstreams developed from the groundwork laid in Phase I, demonstrating the iterative aspect of this research-driven teaching model, as well as the potential for researchers to share resources within a specific phase.

Our contacts with the Archives of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova were unsuccessful in their attempts to unearth archival material or financial reports that mentioned the mosaic; we made additional inquiries with other individuals and institutions in 2020, but we were ultimately unsuccessful in locating the mosaic. Much of our initial research on the mosaic in Cuba took place, however, during the height of the COVID-19 lockdown, and documentation of our correspondence allowed student researchers in Phase III (2023) to continue investigating its whereabouts. Although we have yet to locate these mosaic fragments, their object biography highlights the potentially diverse destinations of these mosaics and their reach far beyond Graeco-Roman antiquity, as well as the potential for students from a diverse range of disciplines, such as history and Spanish language, literature, and culture, to get involved in this research. In addition, our work to bring these stories to a wider public seeks to correct the epistemic injustice of their disappearance from the archival record.

Amplifying the journey of these fragments from Antakya to Princeton to Havana through the project's public-facing channels increases the possibility of eventually tracking them down. In addition, the modern history of these fragments intersects not only with the politics of the territory of Antakya, but also with those of the United States and Cuba. The fact that Villanova was a Catholic institution perhaps motivated the fragments' original acquisition, in an attempt to trace a lineage to Antioch's early Christian history; it also resulted in the eventual expulsion of the Augustinians from Cuba, and the country's takeover of the university (and possibly its mosaics). Disentangling the object biographies of individual mosaic fragments from Antioch foregrounds the complex geopolitics in which they are embedded.

Visualisation through Digital Reconstruction

While ArcGIS allows us to visualise relationships across the corpus of mosaics, it does not allow us to visualise the reconnection of individual fragments with each other. Inspired by the success of Kondoleon's exhibition at the Worcester Art Museum in both reconnecting dispersed fragments and returning them to their original floor display, ARP seeks to achieve similar goals through digital means. During Phase II (Fall 2021), I (Danielle Ortiz) selected a low-cost digital method – Procreate – to re-visualise and reorient disconnected fragments from the same ancient architectural space. In the ARP class, I focused on fragments from the Hall of Philia now in the collection of the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) that have been installed in two separate rooms, disrupting any visitor's ability to see the relationship between them. As this case study demonstrates, even connections between fragments from the same mosaic floor can be difficult to recognise within current installation practices.

In 1934, excavators uncovered a mosaic depicting at least five animal pairings of predator and prey in an outdoor colonnaded hall in Daphne, a suburb of Antioch.[51] The excavators called this outdoor architectural space the "Hall of Philia" because the word ΦΙΛΙΑ, ("philia," ancient Greek for "friendship") spelled out in black tesserae, appears in the background of the mosaic (Figure 10.8).

The excavators divided and lifted preserved sections of the mosaic, separating the series of animals into seemingly isolated pairs of predator and prey – lion and humped ox; tigress and boar; leopard and goat; lioness and stag; and a bear and now-missing prey (lost due to damage to the once outdoor mosaic). The bear in the final pairing is still connected to the lioness and stag fragment, offering some perspective to how the collection of animals may have looked *in situ*, but still largely disconnected from its original context. Once the panels arrived in Baltimore, conservators used plaster to fill in gaps in the mosaic imagery, after which they painted polychrome squares, emulating tesserae, to give viewers the illusion that each fragment is a complete and self-contained scene. Finally, the BMA hung these fragments on walls in two separate rooms – the "Antioch Court"

FIGURE 10.8 Danielle Ortiz standing in front of a mosaic fragment from the Hall of Philia that depicts a lion, a humped ox, and the ancient Greek word *philia*, 2021. Baltimore Museum of Art.

and in an adjacent stairwell, dispersing the panels that were once part of a single continuous scene and reorienting them from floor to wall (Figures 10.9 and 10.10).

To counter the effects of their current display and to help the viewer consider how ancient people might have experienced this mosaic floor, I digitally reconstructed the fragments in a virtual space. This reconstruction invites a more

FIGURE 10.9 Fragment of a mosaic floor from the Hall of Philia that depicts a lion and stag, and a bear on the wall of a stairwell in the Baltimore Museum of Art, 2021.

complex interpretation of the embodied experience of mosaic floors in antiquity, as well as of the symbolic imagery of the collection of animals, when reunited after their arbitrary division into separate panels of individual animal pairs which communicate an entirely different narrative to the modern viewer.

Using low resolution images (to avoid conflict over image rights), I took both the 1930s excavation photographs from the Princeton University Archive and my own images of the existing fragments in the museum and digitally stitched them together in Procreate, a raster graphics editing application. I chose this tool because it is inexpensive and compatible with various operating systems on multiple devices,

FIGURE 10.10 Fragment of a mosaic floor from the Hall of Philia that depicts a tiger and a goat, installed on the wall of a stairwell in the Baltimore Museum of Art, with a modern installation in the left foreground, 2021.

thus reducing barriers to use by others; however, there are several other digital applications that could enhance and normalise this practice within a museum setting.[52] I first imported the images onto a blank page and began by stitching together each individual fragment to prepare them for reorientation in one layer. Using only the relative scale of the fragments to each other, I simply lined up the upper and lower border lines, employing the original excavation photos as a reference. I left

missing imagery in the figural plane blank, so that the significant inpainting from the 1930s conservation effort would be distinguishable from the existing mosaic fragments. In their current state, the inpainting alters the viewers perception of what is actually preserved and accurately representative of the original mosaic imagery. Similarly, the squared-off sections give the illusion that the width of the mosaic is much narrower than the original floor would have been.

Because the excavators primarily lifted the figural imagery and left much of the geometric border pattern *in situ*, I duplicated an image of the existing border fragment and strung copies of it together to fill in the width of the original mosaic and to recreate its border – also seen in the excavation photos, but not displayed in connection to the Hall of Philia today. Finally, I merged all the images into a single layer and, in another layer, altered its orientation to give the illusion of a unified, horizontal image-plane, like a floor. I added a figure stepping onto the mosaic to convey how ancient people might have walked across the images, stepping across and in between the animal pairings (Figure 10.11).

The restored perspective allows the viewer to visualise the fragments as a cohesive mosaic floor and offers a robust reinterpretation of the mosaic as an object with a horizontal orientation that people would have engaged with through an entirely different embodied experience in antiquity.

FIGURE 10.11 Digital visualisation of the mosaic fragments from the Hall of Philia fitted back together as a floor. Danielle Ortiz.

Reconnecting the fragments allows for a renewed formal analysis of the mosaic, revealing easily overlooked iconographic details and context that its current fragmentation obscures. Observed as a virtual whole, each pair of predator and prey stands equidistant along a groundline marked by tesserae that may have also served as the grounding perspective for an ancient viewer walking along the hall's floor with the ability to view the animals from the top down in a variety of perspectives. Entering the hall, an ancient person would have first walked across the "Lion and the Humped Ox" pair, inscribed with the word *philia* – inflecting their interpretation of the other animal pairs. The animals are uniform in scale, so that even larger animals appear equal in size to their respective counterparts. The manipulation of the scale blurs the distinction between predator and prey, an effect that is weakened by the museum's current installation of the fragments. Despite the predator–prey relationships on display, the inscription and the equal scale of the animals may have guided those walking across the mosaic to maintain "philia" with one another. Hanging these fragments vertically on walls presents each like a self-contained painting, thus separating them from the modern viewer's embodied experience of space, unlike the ancient artists' intent.

These more complex interpretations of the imagery and how the ancient viewer encountered them are only possible through a physical or conceptual mending of the mosaic. A virtual approach has few barriers to entry and offers a low-cost, low-maintenance method that museums and other institutions caring for fragments from Antioch can easily implement to enhance viewer experiences and prompt new interpretations based on reunited fragments.

Conclusion

ARP seeks to rectify epistemic injustices wrought by the dislocation and dispersal of the mosaic fragments, to build community across Antioch researchers, and to draw new people into this work. ARP's research-driven pedagogical model utilises a flipped classroom and builds from the analogue work of earlier Antioch researchers, allowing students to make individual contributions that have immediate and long-term impacts in community with other researchers. By connecting research and teaching, the project upends traditional distinctions between – and hierarchies of – these practices, while simultaneously attracting students with a range of academic backgrounds to learn from and with each other, engage with Antioch researchers beyond the classroom, and share the project's results with the public. As these two specific case-studies – the map and the reconstruction – demonstrate, public-facing digital tools not only expand access to the dispersed Antioch fragments but suggest new interpretations of them. Many of the mosaics once stood in public spaces – baths, religious spaces, public walkways – or in the central spaces of private residences. In the early twentieth century, journalists widely covered the Antioch excavations and the surrounding region's geopolitics in the press. In the intervening years, museums have displayed these displaced

fragments to their publics.[53] ARP's digital tools participate in this same public orientation – one that works to undermine epistemic injustice through access. If ancient mosaics are an analogue form of digitality, rendering patterns and images through pixelated colourful materials, in the present these assemblages suggest new forms of digital connection, reworking, and relationality.

Notes

1 Thank you to Chelsea Gardner and Sabrina Higgins for the invitation to participate and the thoughtful editorial process, as well as to the external reviewers and the authors of this volume for their suggestions. In addition, we would like to thank the students of Phase 1 and 2 of the Antioch Recovery Project, Benjamin Anderson, Nicole Berlin, Andrea De Giorgi, Lena Denis, Asa Eger, Lael Ensor-Bennett, Julia Gearhart, Maya Kahane, Christine Kondoleon, Jennifer Kingsley, Amy Pistone, Kevin Tervala, and Elizabeth Dospěl Williams.

2 Archival material from these excavations has been digitised and made available to researchers through the Princeton Archaeological Archives: https://collections.visual-resources.princeton.edu/Detail/collections/30 and the Ochre database: https://ochre.lib.uchicago.edu/antioch/.

3 Neep 2012, 21–38. On archaeology in Syria and the French Mandate, see Griswold 2019.

4 Aware of this imminent political shift, which was widely discussed in the international press as the League of Nations weighed input from France, Syria, and Türkiye, the excavators rushed to remove as many mosaic fragments as possible in the lead-up to the 1939 territory transfer; excavations ended in that same year. See, The Sun 1939, June 30; Watenpaugh 1996, 363–89. On the contemporary refugee crisis in Antakya, see Şule 2019, 35–65.

5 Pickett 2024, citing Stephen Batiuk in Fig. 27.2–3, which maps ancient earthquakes.

6 Estrin et al. 2023; Erol 2024. On the geomorphology of the region, see Batiuk 2024 (25, Table 2.1), with a summary of ancient earthquakes, their intensity, and number of casualties, where known.

7 Visual Resource Collection 2024b.

8 Charles Morey at Princeton was initially invited to participate in the excavations because of Princeton's ties to excavations in Syria and the Christian Art Index. Morey recruited the American participants from other cities and institutions (Visual Resource Collection 2024b). On Narcissus, see Stager 2021; on geometric patterns, see Klein 2020 and Berlin 2021; on Christian imagery, see Gallito 2021; on aquatic images, see Kondoleon 2000, on apotropaic imagery, see Stager 2024a; on topography, see Stager 2024b and Molacek 2024, 98–99; on the construction of gender identity in the scene of a funerary banquet, see Casella 2024, 247–48.

9 Berlin and Miranda 2024, 207–8.

10 For discussion of backing the fragment with modern cement, see Campbell 1937. On shipping routes see Hu 2023.

11 The mosaic fragments allocated to the Syrian government under the original agreement reverted to Türkiye with the change in the territory's governance. As additional institutions joined in support of the excavations, they demanded cuts of the excavated mosaics. For example, Princeton graduate and wealthy Baltimorean Robert Garrett confirmed Baltimore's participation with the following telegram to Charles Morey at Princeton: "By strong arm methods succeeded in securing favorable action Trustees agreement will be signed shortly. Only change calls for payments over period several months. We will expect ten percent of objects found." Garrett 1930. While the Baltimore Museum of Art is more typically listed as the committee member, Baltimore

participated in the excavations through the Antioch Subscription Fund, to which many residents of Baltimore (some also museum trustees) committed money. Newspaper articles from the 1930s indicate that people of the city of Baltimore saw the excavations and the mosaics as part of their civic heritage (Copinger 1933). In 1936, Dumbarton Oaks and the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard joined the consortium and received a share in the mosaic distribution, resulting in a reallocation of the percentages.

12 This distribution does not account for any mosaic fragments in private collections.
13 Appadurai 2017.
14 Erol 2024. On mosaic as assemblage see Stager 2022, 238–72, esp. 261–66, figs. 150–51.
15 Eger and De Giorgi 2021, 4; Pellizzari 2024.
16 Rosenkranz 2023; Molholt 2017, 287; Ling 1998, 6; recent work emphasises, instead, the local character of the mosaics, see Molacek and Rogers 2021.
17 New York Herald Tribune 1936, November 18.
18 Fricker 2007, 155.
19 In 2022, Kevin Tervala, Jennifer Kingsley, and students at Johns Hopkins reworked the wall labels for the Antioch mosaics in the Baltimore Museum of Art to tell a more global narrative from the same objects. See Antioch Recovery Project 2022, September 16.
20 On the marginalisation of East Roman Studies, see Anderson and Ivanova 2023; and Kaldellis 2024, 1–8, with bibliography.
21 For a discussion regarding the static collection and labelling practices in museums, see Malvoisin, this volume.
22 On counter-storytelling, see Hill, Chapter 7, this volume.
23 Department of State 2000; Kondoleon 2000; On the exhibition history of the fragments, see Berlin and Miranda 2024, 208–209.
24 "Trail of Two Cities" 2001.
25 Kondoleon 2000; On the complexity of expanding access through digital tools, see Johnston et al., this volume.
26 Classics Research Lab: https://classics.jhu.edu/classics-research-lab/.
27 Zheng et al. 2020; Reidsema et al. 2017; Long et al. 2017.
28 Bredow et al. 2021; Howell 2021.
29 Kolodziejski 2020.
30 "Conservation": https://www.antiochrecoveryproject.org/conservation.
31 Gonzalez 2020. Note that JSTOR acquired Artstor since the inception of this project and has migrated our database to the new platform.
32 See, "Antioch Mosaic Distribution Map": https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=df b15fa40a4647288b11b1139697903e&extent=-172.2656,-9.1412,172.2656,82.8921.
33 Visual Resources Collection, Department of Art and Archaeology n.d. http://vrc.princeton.edu/researchphotographs/s/antioch/page/introduction.
34 Antioch Recovery Project: https://www.antiochrecoveryproject.org/. On media richness and pedagogy, see Johnston et al., this volume.
35 See Gonzalez and Kahane 2020 and 2024. The StoryMaps and ArcGIS mapping project was also featured in a *Johns Hopkins Magazine* profile. See Wallach 2020.
36 Kondoleon 2000.
37 The plan is also outlined on our StoryMaps.
38 A huge thanks to Near Eastern Studies graduate student Laurel Poolman, who helped us with our many questions about ArcGIS. ArcGIS mapping software would take on even further significance through its use by Johns Hopkins as the preeminent COVID-19 tracker. See Johns Hopkins University 2023, March 10. https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/409af567637846e3b5d4182fcd779bea.
39 Cimok 2000.

40 Jones 1981.
41 "City Acquires Collection of Hellenistic Mosaics: Portion of Famous Group Unearthed in Antioch Arrives to Become Property of Art Museum. Finest Ever Uncovered, Says McKinney." 1936.
42 In connection with the exhibition opening in 2026, "Excavating Antioch," curated by Nicole Berlin, she and Elizabeth Molacek have been documenting small fragments stored in different collections that, until now, have remained unaccessioned – their results will expand the number of extant fragments significantly. Antioch Recovery Project 2023 (November 22).
43 Wadsworth Athenaeum, "Fragment of a Floor Mosaic." https://5058.sydneyplus.com/argus/final/Portal/Public.aspx?lang=en-US.
44 Committee for the Excavation of Antioch on the Orontes 1932–1939.
45 See WLRN, This Miami Life 2015. In addition to these archival documents, we are indebted to several colleagues who helped us in our attempts to try and track down the mosaic fragments, including Julia Gearhart from Princeton, fellow History of Art graduate student Celia Rodriguez Tejuca, Richard C. Ekmann of the Archives of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, and Isabel M. Medina, the Assistant Archivist and Museum Coordinator at St. Thomas University, Villanova, in Florida, among others.
46 Aguililla n.d.
47 "Mosaics contribution B, ANT AM F-8 05- Mosaics contribution B, ANT AM F-8 23" in The Excavations of Antioch-on-the-Orontes Online, *Ochre*: https://ochre.lib.uchicago.edu/antioch/.
48 Thank you to Julia Gearhart for this information and providing scans of the correspondences. All correspondences referenced related to the Cuba mosaic may be credited to the Antioch Expedition Archive, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University.
49 Brown 2023.
50 Hu 2023.
51 "View of mosaic floor.," *Archaeological Archives*, http://vrc.princeton.edu/archives/items/show/13528; See Visual Resource Collection 2024a.
52 Adobe Photoshop, Affinity Photo, GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Programme), and ArtStudio Pro are other examples of digital manipulation tools similar to Procreate that can be used for the same or similar digital reimagination projects within the museum context. Some offer higher-quality image capabilities, such as Adobe Photoshop, for projects that require more professional visuals, whereas others such as GIMP offer free, open-source capabilities for researchers looking to experiment with images with limited resources.
53 On the pluralities of publics, see Funke et al., this volume.

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SECTION 3

Public Projects, Local and Global

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11

WIKI EDUCATION, THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN CLASSROOM, AND THE PRODUCTION OF GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE[1]

Chelsea A.M. Gardner and Victoria Austen

Wikipedia is the first place I go when I'm looking for knowledge ... or when I want to create some.

— *Stephen Colbert*[2]

Introduction

Imagine a scene: it is 2005 and a professor is presenting a convincing demonstration as to why one should never rely on Wikipedia as a resource for research. In front of a captive audience of undergraduate students, the professor opens the Wikipedia page for the course textbook and calls on a student in the class. He asks for their full name and then – right before the students' eyes! – he changes the last name of the textbook's author to the chosen student's last name. Edit. Save. "See?" he says, smiling from the effectiveness of this demonstration, "Anyone can edit Wikipedia." Fast forward a few weeks, and the professor once again shows the class the Wikipedia page for the textbook. Pointing out to the class that the incorrect name remains unchanged, the professor solidifies his victory, and his earlier warning against the untrustworthiness of Wikipedia has been thoroughly legitimised.[3]

The above description undoubtedly sounds familiar to many readers who grew up during the infancy of Wikipedia, which launched as an open-access, crowd-sourced resource on January 15, 2001. Four years later, in 2005, it contained only 438,500 articles and was still largely considered to be an "enemy" of sorts, especially in the face of proper, rigorous, peer-reviewed academic research.[4] The open-editing model of the site was consistently viewed as a cause for concern

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by scholars, especially regarding the quality of writing, the potential for digital vandalism, and the accuracy of information on the platform.[5] Now, however, English-language Wikipedia boasts 6,926,666 articles; there are 336 additional, active language editions, for a current total of 64,131,795 articles.[6] In 2024, the site received a *minimum* of 301 million views per day (142 billion views total) and is often the first place people look for information, either intentionally or as the result of internet searches.[7] As of December 2024, Google retains control of approximately 89.98% of the market share of search engine platforms, and has a public-facing relationship with the Wikimedia Foundation, whose aim is to increase knowledge equity and accessibility on a global scale.[8] Google's support of the Wikimedia Foundation's suite of translation tools is (and will be) crucial for establishing a truly global reach for Wikipedia – the Foundation's ongoing work is focused specifically on improving the range and quality of content translation.[9]

These statistics suggest that Wikipedia is now often the first point of access for those seeking information on a given topic. Twenty-three years after its launch, Wikipedia is no longer a new, unproven, platform, largely viewed with scepticism from the academy (would it last?) but, rather, a web resource that is acknowledged as a permanent fixture within the virtual landscape. Many still doubt its merits and actively denounce it as a legitimate source for research, especially in the realm of traditional academic gatekeeping that confines peer-reviewed research within the physical walls (and behind the digital paywalls) of academic institutions – but, like it or not, Wikipedia is here to stay.[10]

In what follows, we discuss our own experiences as academics who embraced Wikipedia through the introduction of Wiki Education assignments in our undergraduate-level courses. By highlighting pedagogical methods, considerations, and outcomes we encourage educators to implement similar assignments as a way for students to produce knowledge and improve publicly available resources. We argue that there is much to be gained by embracing the merits of Wikipedia as an open source of information and by working collectively to improve the quality of its content from a pedagogical standpoint, through the perspective of knowledge accessibility and equity, and for engaging in public-facing scholarship. The latter point is of particular importance to disciplines related to Ancient Mediterranean, North African, and Western Asian Studies (including Classics, Ancient History, Egyptology, Classical Archaeology, Near Eastern Studies, etc.) that are relatively small in terms of professional numbers (programmes, majors, secondary and post-secondary faculty, etc.), but which garner significant interest from the general population.[11] In this chapter, we argue that there are many benefits to using Wikipedia as a pedagogical tool and as a legitimate form of public-facing scholarship. This discussion, however, must take place within the broader context of utilising Wikipedia in any manner, and the inherent drawbacks therein, including issues related to unpaid labour, gender and racial biases in Wikipedia's contributor demographics and content, exploitation of volunteer efforts, and pedagogical decisions regarding content production. Although we ultimately advocate for the

use of Wiki Education in the classroom, we acknowledge that there are unresolved ethical issues related to its implementation, and we present these throughout the sections that follow.

Wikipedia Statistics: The Ancient Mediterranean

Without contest, the most popular page related to the ancient Mediterranean world is that of Cleopatra. In the month of May 2024 *alone*, her page received 4,599,620 total views, and an average of 148,375 views per day.[12] The total views equate to over four million more than the second most popular pages for both the Classical Greece and Rome WikiProject (Jesus: 408,603 total views in May 2024) and the Ancient Egypt WikiProject (Alexander the Great: 346,766 total views in May 2024). Alongside its popularity, Cleopatra's page also has the highest possible Wikipedia ranking, Featured Article (FA), a classification which comprises "some of the best articles Wikipedia has to offer, as determined by Wikipedia editors" due to their "accuracy, neutrality, completeness, and style",[13] and is ranked as "top importance" for the following WikiProjects: (1) Classical Greece and Rome; (2) Ancient Egypt; (3) Women's History; (4) Rome; (5) Egypt; (6) Greece; (7) Africa; and (8) Wiki Loves Women.

Cleopatra's page, therefore, is a rare case wherein the popularity, assessment, and importance rankings correspond – it is exemplary as a model for responsible, accurate, neutrally worded resources for the study of the ancient world.[14] This is particularly noteworthy in the context of Wikipedia's evaluation (aka "ranking") system which, like the encyclopaedia itself, is a product of volunteer hours and subject to varying levels of potential subjective biases. For example, to achieve the highest quality ranks ("Featured" and "Good" articles), pages must be submitted for consideration and are subject to peer review by content editors. The process is reciprocal and open, wherein discussion can take place among evaluators but, ultimately, the quality of the page must meet eligibility criteria and pass editorial review guidelines; it is crucial to note that the highest quality pages are reviewed regularly to ensure their maintenance and continual improvement with ongoing scholarship.[15] The "importance" designation of a page, meanwhile, is an entirely subjective product of the members of a given WikiProject, any of whom are eligible to voice their opinion on a topic's importance.

"Popularity," in contrast, is based on sheer numbers alone; the fact that Cleopatra, a racialised female historical figure, is undeniably the most popular Wikipedia page in its various categories is impressive for many reasons. Although Wikipedia strives for neutrality in its content, it has long been recognised that the online encyclopaedia suffers from issues of systemic bias. For example, Wikipedia has a documented and self-acknowledged bias towards biographical entries of men – historical, fictional, and currently living alike.[16] Although previous research has focused primarily on Wikipedia's gender gap, more recent studies have also highlighted the underrepresentation of people of colour, and the disproportionate

dominance of Anglophone editors and English-language scholarship. These inequities derive from the fact that the average Wikipedian is white, male, technologically inclined, English speaking, and from a developed nation in the Global North. In terms of content gaps related to race and/or ethnicity, Wikipedia only began gathering this data in 2020, and only from its users residing in the United States and England. In the latest community insight report findings (2023), racial and ethnic minorities are still severely under-represented among Wikipedia editors.[17] As Kai Alexis Smith notes, "Wikipedia was not designed for Black people and they were not involved in its creation."[18] As we discuss below, gender and racial gaps must be confronted in the classroom so that students can be made aware of the biases that exist – and their ability to address them through page/topic selection – even if they themselves do not belong to an underrepresented group.

When it comes to Wikipedia articles related to the ancient Mediterranean world, the trends mirror the broader inequities detailed above (and, once again, highlight the uniqueness of the Cleopatra page's rankings): for example, there are a total of 2,599 articles ranked "Good Article" (GA; the second-highest ranking after Cleopatra's "Featured Article") under the general heading "History" – of these, approximately 190 are directly related to ancient Mediterranean, North African, and Western Asian civilisations. If we narrow down these 190 results and consider only those GAs that fall into the categories of biographies of historical figures, we are left with 116 total, of which only fifteen are dedicated to women: Agrippina the Elder, Berenice (daughter of Herod Agrippa), Boudica, Erinna, Julia Domna, Julia Maesa, Musa of Parthia, Serua-eterat, Teuta, and Theoris of Lemnos, Early Life of Cleopatra, Reign of Cleopatra (both separate from Cleopatra's main FA page), Women in Classical Athens, Epikleros, and Against Neaera. Furthermore, the popularity, relevance, and ranking of these pages are also not necessarily equal: with the exception of Boudica (#102 on WikiProject Greece and Rome), none of these GAs are even within the top 1000 most popular pages for WikiProject Greece and Rome, WikiProject Ancient Near East, or WikiProject Ancient Egypt; and only the Women in Classical Athens and two Cleopatra-related articles are ranked high- or top-importance. Conspicuously absent from this GA list are, for example, three of the most popular (pages for) ancient women after Cleopatra: (1) Hatshepsut (B-class, top importance, #60 on WikiProject Ancient Egypt); (2) Nefertiti (B-class, top-importance, #44 WikiProject Ancient Egypt); and (3) Mary (mother of Jesus) (B-class, low-importance, #16 on WikiProject Ancient Near East).

So, we are confronted with a fundamental problem: the most popular articles do not always correspond to the highest quality articles (in terms of the Wikipedia ranking system), nor are they always the most "important" for a given WikiProject. For example, Figure 11.1 shows the top ten most popular pages under the category Classical Greece and Rome. Of these ten pages, three rank as Featured Articles, two as Good Articles, three as B-Class, and two as C-Class.[19] Seven out of these are of "top importance," which is the ideal correlation for the most popular articles.

Wikipedia:WikiProject Classical Greece and Rome/Popular pages

Add languages

Project page Talk Read Edit source View history

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

< Wikipedia:WikiProject Classical Greece and Rome

This is a list of pages in the scope of Wikipedia:WikiProject Classical Greece and Rome along with pageviews.

To report bugs, please write on the Community tech bot talk page on Meta.

List [edit]

Period: 2024-05-01 to 2024-05-31

Total views: 65,415,795

Updated: 21:03, 5 June 2024 (UTC)

Rank	Page title	Views	Daily average	Assessment	Importance
1	Cleopatra	4,616,832	148,930	FA	Top
2	Jesus	408,603	13,180	FA	Top
3	Alexander the Great	351,519	11,339	GA	Top
4	Roman Empire	329,183	10,618	B	Top
5	Julius Caesar	301,873	9,737	B	Top
6	Serbia	284,607	9,180	B	Mid
7	Catholic Church	256,780	8,283	GA	High
8	Albania	254,881	8,221	C	High
9	Byzantine Empire	246,029	7,936	FA	Top
10	Greek alphabet	223,784	7,218	C	Top

FIGURE 11.1 Wikipedia pages ranked 1–10 in popularity of interest to the WikiProject "Classical Greece and Rome." Retrieved June 2024.

The next fifteen articles (#11–25 in popularity rankings), however, reveal a slightly different image, as illustrated in Figure 11.2. Here, we can see that seven articles are categorised as top importance, but only one of these (Augustus) can claim FA status. although there are also three additional articles ranked as "high importance," only two of these are given GA status, with the remaining one only reaching C-class status. In fact, the only other FA in the top #11–25 pages is of "low importance" to Classical Greece and Rome (The Statue of Liberty), and only one of the GAs in the #11–25 pages for popularity are also ranked as top importance (Aristotle).

Beyond the 25 most popular articles, only 124 of the 1000 most popular pages for the Classical Greece and Rome WikiProject are ranked "top importance" – of those, only three (2%) are FAs and fifteen (12%) are GAs; yet fifty-one (41%) are B-class, while 55 (45%) are C-class.[20] The biggest discrepancy between article

11	Zeus	220,894	7,125	C	Top
12	Marcus Aurelius	214,592	6,922	GA	High
13	Augustus	211,526	6,823	FA	Top
14	Gladiator (2000 film)	210,956	6,805	B	Mid
15	Colosseum	193,459	6,240	B	Top
16	Stoicism	186,794	6,025	GA	High
17	Statue of Liberty	174,572	5,631	FA	Low
18	Apollo	169,286	5,460	B	Top
19	Achaemenid Empire	167,461	5,401	C	Top
20	Rome	165,871	5,350	B	Mid
21	Sparta	156,698	5,054	B	Top
22	Pompeii	156,202	5,038	C	Top
23	Aristotle	155,695	5,022	GA	Top
24	Nero	151,439	4,885	C	High
25	Aphrodite	150,821	4,865	GA	High

FIGURE 11.2 Wikipedia pages ranked 11–25 in popularity of interest to the WikiProject "Classical Greece and Rome." Retrieved June 2024.

quality and importance is found in the five "start-class" articles within this top-importance sub-grouping: Minerva, Minotaur, Hermes Trismegistus, Labyrinth, and Ancient Corinth.

The above overview of statistics related to Wikipedia pages on topics concerning the ancient Mediterranean thus reveals a central dilemma: with so many people using Wikipedia as the primary source of information, how do we, as scholars, ensure that these pages convey accurate, relevant, and up-to-date scholarship about these subjects? And, following this, how do we ensure that the content generated addresses existing lacunae in publicly available information and encompasses all demographic groups, including those traditionally marginalised in the fields related ancient Mediterranean studies?

Wikipedia in the University Classroom

One of the most obvious solutions to these problems is to have subject experts edit and improve Wikipedia articles. This solution might be obvious, but that does not mean that it is simple, since the prospect – and process – of becoming a Wikipedia editor can be daunting. Moreover, in an effort to maintain neutrality and avoid bias, Wikipedia cautions against conflict-of-interest editing, which can include excessive self-citations.[21] As such, academics may be reluctant to contribute to articles in their areas of expertise for fear of violating these policies, especially if they are the leading scholar on a particular topic. Finally, some still identify with the sentiment that we touched on briefly above: that Wikipedia is not a resource worth contributing to, since it is often perceived as unreliable and incomplete

or viewed with apprehension, wariness, and skepticism – especially in the context of the university classroom. Other academics might disagree with the use of Wikipedia as an educational tool or resource due to the apparatus itself and the ethical concerns of incorporating a platform that boasts such content biases as described above, and which relies largely on volunteer labour to address those biases.[22] Regardless of the motivation behind one's wariness, the fact remains that, in this situation, those with access to the most knowledge are also those who are often most hesitant to share it.

In 2013, Wiki Education was established to address some of these concerns and to provide training and support to subject experts wishing to improve Wikipedia articles. One of the ways Wiki Education achieves this active engagement in knowledge-sharing is through Wikipedia and Wikidata training courses, with the ultimate goal of making the site "more reliable, factual, and equitable for the benefit of all."[23] In what follows, we discuss our own experiences as Wikipedia editors and our adoption of Wiki Education as part of our pedagogical practices that contribute directly to publicly accessible scholarship.

We must begin, however, with the clear recognition that we are in no way trailblazers for adopting Wikipedia into secondary and post-secondary assignments. Wiki Education has been providing free support, training, platforms, and resources to educators since 2013 but, even prior to this, instructors were creating their own Wikipedia-based classroom assignments.[24] Educators from over 500 North American institutions have incorporated Wiki Education into their curricula, and in Spring 2024 alone there were 362 registered courses with just over 6,000 students contributing 4,690,000 million words. The incorporation of Wiki Education into curricula has had a substantial impact on the quality of Wikipedia's content: since the inception of Wiki Education, students account for the addition of over 110 million words, and the creation/improvement of over 141,000 million articles that have collectively garnered over 438 million views at the time of writing.[25] It is difficult to quantify distribution based on course subject, since course names vary so widely from institution to institution, but it seems as though courses related to the ancient Mediterranean and adjacent fields are underrepresented on Wiki Education in comparison to courses from other disciplines. For example, a search for courses on the Wiki Education Dashboard for the term "psych*" yields 166 results; "biology," 210; "politic*," 120; "English," 176; and "history," 307. In contrast, "classics"/"classical" yields four; "ancient," fifteen of geographic relevance;[26] "Greek/Greece," ten; "Rome/Roman," twelve; "Egypt," three (but two concern modern/twentieth-century Egypt); "Near East," none.[27] Some course titles contain more than one of the above search terms, so the total number of courses under the umbrella of the ancient European/Western Asian/North African world is only thirty-four. By providing a discussion of our own experiences, our hope is to improve these numbers and encourage others to incorporate Wiki Education assignments into their classrooms as a way of effectively bridging the divide between the academy and the public.

Methodology and Considerations

The Wiki Education classroom assignment is straightforward, yet comprehensive and customisable. Prior to the start of the semester, educators submit information about the desired length of the assignment and select various training, exercises, and/or readings to generate the course-specific Wiki Education dashboard (Figure 11.3).

Although the length and scope of each Wiki Education project is flexible, both authors implemented the assignment as a semester-long endeavour, wherein students began with a gradual introduction to the Wikipedia platform, followed by a series of low-stakes training modules and exercises that provide guidance to student editors as they begin to create and edit the content of their chosen Wikipedia page (Figure 11.4).

Since the end goal of the assignment is to create public-facing scholarship, students will also, by default, become public scholars in their own right. It should, therefore, be made clear to participants at the beginning of the course that all data arising from the trainings themselves and any content generated by them will become publicly available. For example, the Wiki Education dashboard for all

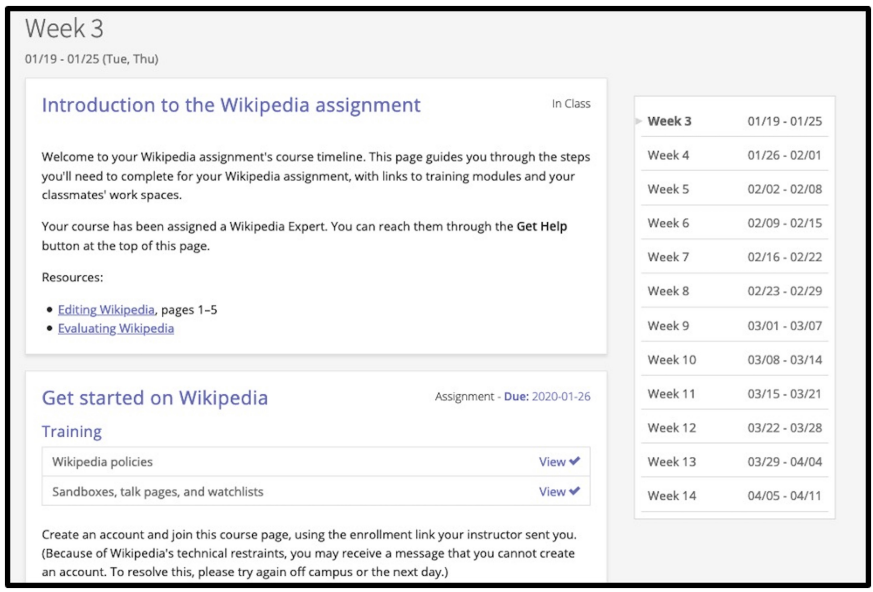

FIGURE 11.3 Example: Wiki Education dashboard from Victoria Austen's 2021 "Roman Britain" class. Retrieved July 2023. A Wiki Education dashboard is automatically generated for each class and remains adjustable throughout the duration of the class.

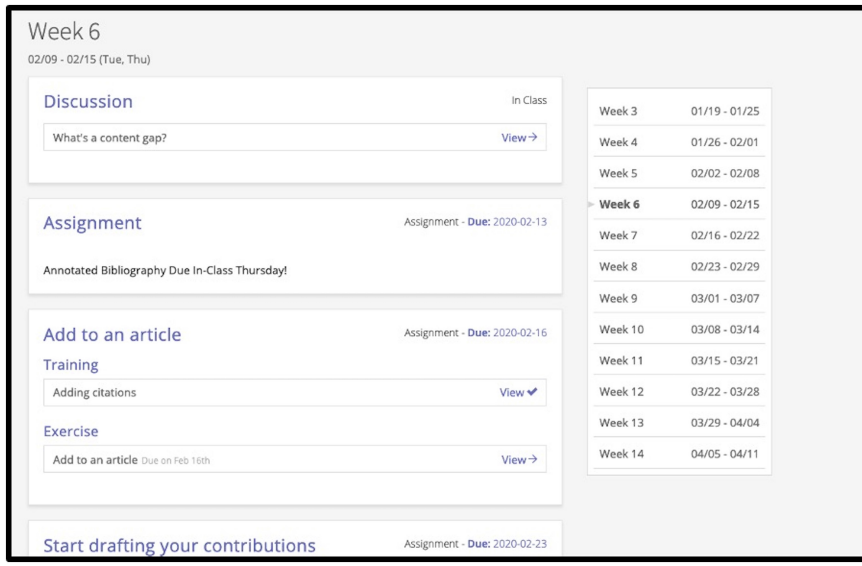

FIGURE 11.4 Example of Wiki Education training and assignments from Victoria Austen's 2021 "Roman Britain" class. Retrieved July 2023. Other potential training modules include "Thinking about sources and plagiarism"; "Compile a brief annotated bibliography"; and "Evaluating articles and sources."

courses (including timeline, student editors, articles, and statistics) are visible, as are the accompanying Wikipedia pages.[28] Being a public scholar, though, does not necessitate waiving rights to anonymity, and every Wikipedia editor – student or otherwise – is able to create a Wikipedia username as revealing or as anonymous as they choose.[29]

As part of a Wiki Education programme, educators can also choose to formally incorporate classroom discussions on various topics into their timeline over the course of the semester. The purposeful inclusion of such conversations allows instructors to introduce students to broader issues facing Wikipedia, including its significant content gaps and ongoing issues of knowledge equity.

Content Gaps

In our experience, classroom discussions on Wikipedia's content gaps are particularly effective if they occur *before* students select their final articles, since students tend to carefully choose their contributions with these considerations in mind.[30] For example, many students in our courses chose to contribute to pages not for their popularity but, rather, to address either a specific gender

content gap or to contribute new content related to non-Anglophone and indigenous cultures. Indeed, students are often displeased that there exists such content gaps on a supposedly "neutral" platform; the gender gap is especially salient in North American undergraduate humanities classrooms, wherein students identifying as women tend to outnumber those identifying as men (and the reader is likely aware that the reverse is true as one moves up the academic ranks).[31] The disparity in demographic breakdown between Wikipedia editors at-large, existing biographies on Wikipedia, and Wiki Education participants thus highlights the importance of the specific educational programme under discussion within undergraduate classrooms; for example, although only 13% of Wikipedia editors identify as women, 70% of Wiki Education participants identify as women or non-binary, therefore counteracting some of the inevitable colouring of content by the "average Wikipedian" identified above.[32] Unfortunately, Wiki Education, at the time of writing, has no comparable data on the racial/ethnic breakdown of its participants, a glaring omission that serves as a reminder of the systemic inequities that still exist within the organisation.

Becoming Public Scholars: Knowledge Barriers and Impact

Ultimately, the micro-scale goal for a Wiki Education project is for students to enjoy the assignment by working on articles that interest them or those that they believe are important to improve, whether due to content gap, popularity, or another reason entirely. Enjoyment, a sense of accomplishment, and their contribution to knowledge production may also affect students' decisions to continue to edit and improve Wikipedia in the future.[33] This final point relates directly to the macro-scale goal of incorporating Wiki Education assignments into the undergraduate classroom: providing the foundation for students to become responsible, informed Wikipedians. As such, students can take advantage of their privileged access to paywalled scholarship to improve this digital resource with the hope that they might (eventually) have the confidence to target the most popular articles and those ranked "top" importance, thereby ameliorating the collective body of globally accessible information about the ancient Mediterranean world on Wikipedia.

Wiki Education acknowledges the considerable access to knowledge that post-secondary students enjoy through institutional affiliation and contextualises this privilege by addressing students directly:

> As a student, you can access knowledge that most people can only dream of. You have your library. You have access to academic journals and textbooks. Writing for Wikipedia makes knowledge available for others to learn from. You also have your brain. You have the critical thinking skills, and the academic know-how, to help others make sense of the subjects you're studying. Imagine

> the difference your knowledge can make in people's lives. That's why we're asking you to write for Wikipedia.[34]

This statement is both enlightening and empowering for students, particularly because the prospect of selecting and improving an extremely popular Wikipedia article can be daunting, regardless of whether the new Wikipedian is an undergraduate student with little-to-no background in the subject at hand or an expert in the field.[35] Many of these pages will have hundreds – if not thousands – more readers than the average academic article behind a paywall. This exposure and ease of access is, we argue, precisely why Wikipedia needs more attention from experts, educators, scholars, and students. In fact, trends suggest that Wikipedia's audience will continue to grow as traditional news outlets shrink their footprints and basic internet searches increasingly inform users' first substantive encounters with a particular subject.[36]

Not everyone finds such exposure appealing, and the prospect of having one's words read by thousands of people can be intimidating; this is one reason why the most popular and important pages are often not chosen by students to improve during their Wiki Education projects. One method for mitigating concerns regarding the need to improve the quality of the most popular articles, which are also the most relevant articles to the ancient world, is to incorporate an additional Wikipedia exercise into the class. While students still choose one article to improve individually over the course of the semester, they can also work collectively on improving a more high-profile article on a weekly basis. This component affords students the opportunity to work collaboratively and allows them to contribute to a Wikipedia entry that attracts a significant amount of attention. For example, in the undergraduate seminar "Ancient Sparta and Modern Identity," students chose their own pages to improve; despite the high quality of their contributions, not all of the student selections were particularly popular topics (see "Reactions and Impact" section, below).[37] Therefore, in order to maximise the impact of scholarly output, this course also featured a component wherein students participated in weekly collaborations focused on improving the Wikipedia article for Sparta itself, which is only a B-class quality article, even though it is ranked top importance and listed as #21 on the popular pages within the scope of WikiProject Classical Greece and Rome. This page receives, on average, over 5,000 views daily – in 2023, the page had 1,163,614 page views and received over 300,000 views while the course was in progress. The motivation to improve the quality of the broader Sparta page was rooted in the fact that Sparta's popularity has often been entangled with a misappropriation and misunderstanding of ancient Spartan history, culture, and social organisation.[38] By improving – even slightly – such a high-profile page that is of significant interest to the general public, scholars and those with access to academic sources can play a role in the production of resources that are both responsible and accurate, while also popular and freely available.

Reactions and Impressions

The reactions and reflections of our students to Wiki Education assignments clearly demonstrate the benefits of embracing public scholarship as a teaching tool and the potential of non-traditional assignments for building research capacity, writing skills, and digital literacy. As part of the University of Winnipeg's "Roman Britain" class, students were tasked with writing a short reflective essay at the end of the semester and, across all their responses, several key themes emerged regarding their experiences.[39] These themes are also reflected in the data collected at Acadia University from voluntary feedback provided by students at the end of each semester (sixty-nine individual responses) and the stats from our Wiki Education dashboards.

At the most basic level, many of the essays commented on the value of Wiki Education for developing more "traditional" academic expertise: research and writing skills, navigating digital platforms, and gaining confidence to share academic work with a wider audience. Most students noted how helpful they found the collaborative aspects of the Wiki Education project; not only did students participate in a peer-review exercise, each reviewing the first draft of one of their fellow student's articles, but they were also encouraged to interact with other Wikipedia editors outside of the classroom via Wikipedia Talk pages.

As these initial points suggest, the overall tone of the student reflections was overwhelmingly positive, with many University of Winnipeg students commenting on the uniqueness of the project. Similarly, when Acadia students were asked "Did you enjoy this assignment?," fifty-eight students (84%) selected "yes," seven (10%) chose to write in their own answer, and only four students (6%) selected "no." Indeed, much of the positivity appeared to be linked to the public-facing nature of the project – although many students admitted they had first felt intimidated by the thought of their work being "out there" on the internet, many commented on the huge sense of achievement they felt seeing their articles published on Wikipedia at the end of the semester and how contributing to global knowledge was fulfilling. This mixture of trepidation and pride is once again born out in the Acadia survey results. When students were asked to select all applicable options (from a predetermined list) for what they liked about the assignment, the most frequently chosen included: "I could choose my own topic" (sixty-six; 96%); and "I felt like I was contributing to global knowledge" (forty-eight; 70%). "People will actually read my work!" appeared as a possible selection for what students liked about the assignment *and* what they did not like; the results showed that thirty-two (46%) selected this as an aspect they liked, while fourteen (20%) indicated that they did not like this aspect. Furthermore, when asked "Do you think you will continue to edit Wikipedia in the future?," only four (6%) replied "No"; twenty-seven (39%) responded "Yes," while the remaining thirty-three (48%) were unsure, or qualified their answer (i.e., they would continue to work on or monitor their chosen article; only in the future when they have more time; they would turn their attention to

articles of personal, rather than academic, interest, etc.). Of these thirty-three students in the last group, however, twenty individuals (29%) noted specifically that they would only continue to edit Wikipedia if they were given a similar classroom assignment. The responses for the final question indicate the potential impact that this type of assignment can have on the quality of free, online resources.[40]

Furthermore, when thinking about broader impact and the opportunity for students to engage in meaningful public-facing scholarship, the statistics from our course dashboards speak for themselves. For example, with only fourteen students in the class, the University of Winnipeg Roman Britain class in 2021 contributed 13,600 new words to seventeen different Wikipedia pages, added 286 new references, and uploaded twenty new images to Wikimedia Commons. Within one month of the course's completion, the pages in question had already been viewed over 400,000 times, and the class project was featured on the front page of the "City and Business" section of the *Winnipeg Free Press* newspaper, which has an average weekly circulation of 397,000.[41] Similarly, the 2021 Acadia University seminar "Ancient Sparta and Modern Identity" had only six students, but these individuals contributed 24,800 words and 316 references to ten separate Wikipedia articles. Across all of our Wiki Education courses, we can also point to significant individual improvement statistics, as well as external page views *for the duration of the semester alone* (italics for emphasis): Amaterasu (2327 words and 35 references added; 111,223 views); Boudica (1702 words and 36 references added; 97,334 views); Hercules (1118 words and 20 references added; 217,476 views); Minerva (2119 words and 31 references added; 96,916 views); and the Rape of the Sabine Women (1334 words and 12 references added; 86,607 views). Furthermore, the page views for even those less "popular" topics demonstrate the potential for wide-reaching impact: *agoge* (1,259,613 total views; 427 daily average); *crypteia* (449,788 total views; 152 daily average); and Cynisca (164,974 total views; 56 daily average). The number of views for these articles are surprisingly high considering that all three of these example pages are ranked start-class and mid-importance for the Classical Greece and Rome WikiProject.[42]

When comparing the above data points to the view and download metrics for peer-reviewed academic articles, the difference is staggering.[43] The transmission of knowledge through traditional, academic venues is, at its core, restricted: paywalls and obscure hosting platforms contribute to limited accessibility. In contrast, Wikipedia has enabled transmission of knowledge in an unprecedented way. The notion of increased access to knowledge, a key theme of the present volume, was also present in reflective essays written by University of Winnipeg students, many of whom noted how the Wiki Education project had a profound impact on the way they perceived knowledge composition and distribution, and who also reflected on the privileged position they were in by having access to resources that are typically unavailable to the general public.

Regardless of the reliability, accuracy, or relevance of information within Wikipedia articles on topics relating to the ancient world, there is no denying its

popularity and global presence. Thus, it is up to us – scholars, academics, experts on the ancient world – to decide whether we will denounce Wikipedia in our classrooms and deny its use and usefulness, or accept it provisionally as a resource with both merits (unparalleled potential for global scholarship) and clear pitfalls (reliance on unpaid labour to correct the biases that its own users have created). Only by having an open and honest conversation about the pros and cons of Wikipedia as a platform can we equip students with the information and tools necessary to critique and (hopefully decide they are in a position to) improve its content, to break down barriers to globally accessible knowledge, and to work towards responsibly generated public-facing scholarship.

Concluding Thoughts

Wikipedia is now over twenty years old. The website is thus the same age as, if not older than, many undergraduate students – who themselves have never lived in a world without this virtual resource – and it is safe to say that it is here to stay. As the world's largest free, online encyclopaedia, Wikipedia is often the first point of reference for users, both casual and professional, searching for information about the ancient Mediterranean, North Africa, and Western Asia. It is accessed more frequently than any other resource for the ancient Mediterranean – print or online – and, as such, retains a massive impact on popular understandings of classical antiquity. Yet, it remains our choice to decide whether to embrace its merits and work collectively to address its flaws. Through the Wiki Education case studies described above, we have demonstrated how we can implement this form of pedagogical exercise to "improve Wikipedia, enrich student learning, and build a more informed public."[44]

Ultimately, we are knowledge makers and educators who have privileged access to restricted resources and content. In this capacity, we have the ability – and, we argue, responsibility – to eliminate knowledge barriers and to improve open-access, globally available resources; we can also contribute to the effective use of Wikipedia by implementing it as a pedagogical tool in the classroom. By encouraging increased engagement with and contributions to public facing scholarship through Wikipedia, while confronting and challenging its biases, we can only imagine what this resource might hold in the next twenty years to come.

Notes

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experiments in the classroom (Acadia University; University of Hawai'i at Mānoa; University of Winnipeg), to the support staff at Wiki Education, and to all those who work tirelessly to improve the content on Wikipedia.

2 The performative editing of Wikipedia, as outlined in the first paragraph of this current work, was also exploited repeatedly by Stephen Colbert: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_impact_of_The_Colbert_Report.

3 This anecdote is based on the recollections of Chelsea Gardner from her time as an undergraduate at McMaster University.

4 All statistics in this current article are from English Wikipedia in May 2024, and were retrieved in June 2024 (unless otherwise stated). It is understood that the metrics are constantly changing. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Size_of_Wikipedia.

5 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Wikipedia_controversies.

6 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Wikipedias. We recognise that our conclusions are limited by focusing solely on English-language Wikipedia. Studies have demonstrated that English Wikipedia is *not* representative of all Wiki languages and is, in several cases, an outlier: see Lemmerich et al. 2019, 618–26.

7 https://stats.wikimedia.org/#/en.wikipedia.org/reading/total-page-views/normal|line|1-year|~total|daily; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Search.

8 Wikimedia Foundation 2019, January 22.

9 Giner 2019, September 23.

10 Soules 2015, 213–26. On the evolution of attitudes towards Wikipedia in the classroom, we can compare the editorials of, for example, Pettigrew 2011 and D'Agostino 2022; cf. Colón-Aguirre and Fleming-May 2012, 391–99. Moreover, studies of content accuracy indicate a higher reliability for "prosumer" resources like Wikipedia than is commonly assumed, e.g., Mesgari et al. 2015, 219–45.

11 Throughout this chapter we will use the term "ancient Mediterranean" to refer to these collective disciplines, although we acknowledge that this is insufficient and that the terminology related to the study of the histories and cultures of the Mediterranean, Northern Africa, and Western Asia is fraught with problems; see, for example, Blouin and Akrigg 2024, 5–16.

12 There was a clear spike in page views for Cleopatra from May-August 2023, likely due to the release of a much-publicised Netflix series; however, the Cleopatra page consistently has views of over four million per month (monthly average for May 2023–May 2024 was 5,110,619 views): https://pageviews.wmcloud.org/?project=en.wikipedia.org&platform=all-access&agent=user&redirects=0&start=2022-07&end=2023-06&pages=Cleopatra.

13 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Featured_articles. There are only 6,507 featured articles on English Wikipedia (~0.10% or one out of every 1,040 articles)

14 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Neutral_point_of_view.

15 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Good_article_criteria; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Featured_article_criteria; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Wikipedia/Assessment; thanks to the anonymous reviewer for pointing out that a common misconception of Wikipedia is that its quality is ephemeral. In contrast, despite the best efforts of online trolls, it is quite difficult to permanently alter the highest quality Wikipedia pages with the intention to discredit or weaken their content, since these are monitored quite closely.

16 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender_bias_on_Wikipedia; Leonard 2018; Koerner 2019; Xing and Vetter 2020; Smith 2021; Lemieux et al. 2023.

17 https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Community_Insights/Community_Insights_2023_Report

18 Smith 2021, 101.

19 A list of a pages within the scope of the WikiProject "Classical Greece and Rome," along with their popularity and article rating, can be found at: https://en.wikipedia.org

/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Classical_Greece_and_Rome/Popular_pages. B-class articles are described as: "mostly complete and without major problems but requires some further work to reach good article standards." C-class articles are described as: "substantial but is still missing important content or contains much irrelevant material. The article should have some references to reliable sources but may still have significant problems or require substantial cleanup." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Content_assessment.

20 Likewise, for the WikiProject Ancient Near East, only 113/1000 are top importance; of those, only three are FAs and only nine are Gas, but four are still "start-class" ("developing but still incomplete"). The lowest-quality articles (stub-, start-, and even C- and B-class), regardless of importance or popularity, are those that tend to contain minimal, outdated, or irrelevant information; lack robust and recent bibliographies; and, simply, look unprofessional, sparse, or unappealing. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Ancient_Near_East/Popular_pages.

21 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Conflict_of_interest#Citing_yourself.

22 Pettigrew 2011; Koerner 2019; Menking and Erickson 2012. See Higgins et al. in this volume (290–306) for a discussion of the demands of unpaid labour within digital humanities projects.

23 https://wikiedu.org/professional-development/; Higgins et al. supra XXX.

24 For just a few pre-Wiki Education examples, see: Chandler and Gregory 2010, 247–57; Cummings and Barton 2008; Graham 2013; Kenny et al. 2013, 85–90; Knight and Pryke 2012, 649–59. For the Wiki Education pilot programme results, see: Carver et al. 2012, 273–83.

25 https://wikiedu.org/impact/; https://dashboard.wikiedu.org.

26 "Antiquity," of course, being a term of global relevance (see, e.g., Blouin and Akrigg, 2024); "of geographic relevance" refers to courses related directly to the geographic zones of modern-day Europe, Western Asia, and North Africa.

27 https://dashboard.wikiedu.org/explore; "archaeology" yields a further 32 results, and "mythology" yields a further nine results, but the geographical and chronological scope of most of these courses are not defined and so are not included in the data.

28 E.g.: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Wiki_Ed/University_of_Winnipeg/Roman_Britain_(Winter_2021); E.g.:https://dashboard.wikiedu.org/courses/Acadia_University/Rome_-_Republic_and_Empire_(Winter_2020).

29 https://wikiedu.org/terms-of-service/. Both authors utilised Wiki Education courses at Canadian public institutions, but other institutional contexts may differ regarding disclosure; for example, in the United States, participants must consider the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

30 In this way, student motivations parallel the motivations of instructors: see Xing and Vetter 2020.

31 See, for example, Marcus 2019; Matias 2019; Kelly 2019. Specific demographics for fields related to Ancient Mediterranean Studies include the censuses taken in 2014 and 2017 by the Society for Classical Studies (https://classicalstudies.org/professional-matters/departmental-census-report-2017-census) and the study conducted by Heath-Stout et al. 2023. See also Goldman and Futo Kennedy 2021.

32 Although women are markedly underrepresented among editors overall, among newcomers (those who started contributing in 2021 or later), 20% identified as women and 7% as gender diverse: see https://wikiedu.org/impact/; https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Community_Insights/Community_Insights_2023_Report#Ethnic_minority_group_belonging_and_discriminated_group_belonging.

33 Lampe et al. 2012, 403–6.

34 Wiki Education 2017, 2.

35 Farzan and Kraut 2013, 783–92; Miller 2014, A72–A86; Littlejohn and Hood 2018, 784.

36 See, for example, Ezell 2021, 1324–336. Here, the author notes that a staggering 74.1% of Wikipedia's traffic comes from internet searches.
37 This course was offered through Acadia University (HIST 3693). One student's improvements to the page "Black Soup" earned them the honour of being showcased on Wikipedia's homepage as a "Did You Know?" feature, but this page only receives an average of 100 views per day; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Recent_additions/2021/May#26_May_2021.
38 For example, Roche 2013; Jensen 2017, 704–23; Gardner 2020.
39 Further student reflections can also be found at University of Winnipeg 2021, June 30; and are featured in Wiki Education 2021, May 27.
40 See especially Lampe et al. (2012, 403–6) for the correlation between classroom exposure to editing Wikipedia and the likelihood of future editing.
41 Winnipeg Free Press 2023. An online version of the article on Victoria Austen's class can be accessed at https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2021/08/03/modern-twist-on-teaching-classics.
42 It must be noted, however, that there is often a delay between substantial editing and updated page categorisation due to Wikipedia relying on volunteer editors for content assessment: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Content_assessment.
43 The Cambridge Core has an excellent model for publicly available statistics. A simple search for the term "Sparta*" in Cambridge Core journal article titles allowed for a quick analysis of recent peer-reviewed publications and their viewer metrics: Nadon 2021 (266 html views; 211 PDF views); Meister 2020 (0 html views; 376 PDF views); Pavlides 2018 (312 html views; 465 PDF views); Esu 2017 (1650 html views; 1327 PDF views); Stafford 2016 (1160 html views; 6137 PDF views). Note the highest number of views is the Stafford publication, which is open access.
44 https://wikiedu.org/mission-and-vision/.

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12

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Archaeology and Community Engagement in the Xeros River Valley (Cyprus)

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Introduction[1]

The way archaeologists have chosen to engage with contemporary societies has drastically changed in recent decades. Guided tours and didactic activities remain popular; however, it is now also quite common to see laypeople and archaeologists collaborating on initiatives such as excavations, surveys, the organisation of outreach events, the management of research projects, and the activation of community stewardship for the protection of sites. International policies encourage this growing commitment to public participation in the cultural heritage sector. The most prominent example is the "Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society" – better known as the Faro convention.[2] This is the first European convention that approaches cultural heritage from a people-centred perspective; heritage is important because of the meanings that people attach to it and the Faro Convention seeks creative ways of developing and managing community heritage assets with active civil society involvement.

Archaeologists use many different terms to refer to public participation, such as communication, education, learning, outreach, participation, and engagement, all of which describe the different approaches employed.[3] Some of them, such as communication, suggest a top-down process where archaeologists inform the interested public, who then act as recipients of knowledge. The people-centred perspective fostered by the Faro convention requires a more active role by the public. Normally, the terms "participation" and "engagement" describe any two-way collaboration between archaeologists and non-archaeologists, as well as any bottom-up approach employed. An example of public participation is the "Adopt a Monument" programme, which is especially popular in Northern Europe (i.e., Finland, Scotland and Ireland). This programme encourages communities to

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"adopt" monuments in their locality to ensure their protection, upkeep and conservation. Archaeologists and heritage officers provide expertise, mentoring and support to groups involved in the project.[4]

Within the context of this commitment to increase people-centred approaches to heritage, community archaeology seeks to connect archaeology to the contemporary world by fostering collaboration between archaeologists and the interested public. Described as "archaeology from below,"[5] "archaeology by the people for the people,"[6] and "participated archaeology,"[7] community archaeology does not only entail participatory practices in fieldwork, but also includes direct community involvement in the research process; as such, it represents a distinct field of study.[8] Researchers in community archaeology examine different aspects of the participative dynamics embedded in collaborative programmes and, by collecting, analysing, and interpreting data, they demonstrate how archaeology can benefit contemporary society. Through the inclusion of multiple voices and perspectives in the interpretation of the past, community archaeology promotes an open and public approach to archaeology. Such an approach also aims to make archaeology more democratic by working to empower communities and to deal with contemporary claims to the past as well as with issues of colonialism in relation to Indigenous groups.[9] Archaeologists can also create opportunities for the inclusion and improvement of the well-being of marginalised communities, such as unhoused individuals, veterans, and people with disabilities. However, there are potential negative outcomes of community-based projects, which can include: archaeologists failing to include certain groups; projects being conducted with tokenistic approaches; and superficial engagement driven by grant requirements.[10]

The social, cultural, economic, and legal context in which a project takes place strongly influences how community archaeology is practised therein. Policies and legislation differ between countries and may restrict or expand the available opportunities for public participation and agency in archaeology. As a result, different "community archaeologies" develop in different countries, each with their own characteristics. For example, in Italy, non-archaeologists are not allowed to dig alongside archaeologists. This means that public involvement in digging is not an option. In contrast, England has a more liberal legislative framework and digging is a popular form of public engagement.[11] As reported in the literature, there is no one-fits-all strategy to engage communities.[12]

Likewise, community archaeology as a field of practice and research is not equally widespread; each country and region must respond to local challenges and opportunities for active engagement and subsequently develop its own approach. The United Kingdom has developed a robust theoretical and research framework for community archaeology,[13] while in the Mediterranean – although participation in archaeology has a long tradition – the introduction of community archaeology as a specific field of research is quite recent. As the focus of archaeology in Mediterranean countries has traditionally centred on research and conservation, funding opportunities specifically dedicated to support outreach activities

are rare, and data-driven evaluations of community-based projects are hard to find.[14] In this chapter, we provide an example of an archaeological project based in Cyprus that is committed to fostering civic engagement through outreach activities, measuring the impact of the activities on the interested public in terms of level of satisfaction and educational impact, and acquiring feedback on a digital app about the user experience.

Since 2014, the Settled and Sacred Landscapes of Cyprus project (SeSaLaC) – a systematic archaeological survey – has investigated the Xeros River valley and recorded the heritage sites associated with episodes of violence between the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities in the 1960s and 1970s, whose traces are still visible in today's landscape. In this context, a community project based at the University of Cyprus aims to reconcile past and present through initiatives targeting various groups and offering different perspectives on how to deal with recent historical events. By outlining the strategy for community engagement implemented in the SeSaLaC project, we present the rationale of one community archaeology project in the Mediterranean and demonstrate how archaeologists have adapted their strategies to the specific characteristics of the contemporary socio-political context in the region. Key elements of the Xeros River valley project are driven by two main factors: it is the first public archaeological initiative in Cyprus to be organised by a Cypriot institution, and the archaeologists directing the project are native speakers and reside on the island. These elements facilitate the design of the project in accordance with the interests of the local stakeholders, as well as the implementation and evaluation of the activities.[15]

This chapter, however, will not provide a detailed account of the activities and their evaluation, as these have already been published in other contributions;[16] instead, we offer fresh reflections in terms of active engagement with different groups. The opportunities and challenges faced by our group in the Xeros River valley will resonate in the presentation of the survey project, the particular historical context of the Xeros River valley, and the data-driven evaluation of the initiatives carried out over the years. A stakeholder analysis will inform the final discussion on the approach taken by the research team to engage different groups with the heritage of the valley.

Running an Archaeological Survey in a Contested Valley

The Xeros River valley is located in the Larnaca district in Cyprus at a major junction of the island's main motorway, which links the capital, Nicosia, with the towns of Larnaca (to the southeast) and Limassol (on the south coast). Today, the valley lies in a landscape almost devoid of recent real estate development and is home to the communities of Kophinou and Alaminos. Alaminos is located four kilometres southeast of Kophinou and is crossed by the river Xeros (ξηρός, xērós; meaning "dry" in Greek). Along its course, this river creates a fertile valley, wherein people have used a canalisation system to water their orchards since antiquity. Over the

centuries, the fertility of the valley, in combination with the presence of the river, contributed to agricultural development in the area. The valley is home to heritage sites, including a medieval tower and an Ottoman watermill at Alaminos, stone bridges from the British colonial period, and the Byzantine church of Panagia Kophinou. Another Byzantine church, that of Panagia Astathkiotissa, is located in the territory of the village of Agios Theodoros, which is part of the neighbouring Pentashoinos River valley; it is included in this discussion, however, since it overlooks the Xeros River valley and is thus a part of this landscape. The presence of Muslim religious sites and the remains of the abandoned Turkish-Cypriot districts within the villages of Kophinou and Alaminos, along with former Turkish-Cypriot military bunkers on the hilltops around Kophinou, attest to the historical significance of the Xeros River valley in the twentieth century.

The recent history of the valley is marked by conflicts and violence between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots. In the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, the two communities lived together peacefully. However, with the end of British rule, the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, and the interethnic conflict in the years 1963–1974, Kophinou became the largest Turkish-Cypriot village in the island. The Greek-Cypriots feared that the Turkish-Cypriots would create an enclave in the area and this situation led to one of the most significant episodes of violence during those years. On November 15, 1967, the Cypriot National Guard attacked the village, killing twenty-four and wounding nine individuals – all Turkish Cypriots, who are buried in an abandoned cemetery in Kophinou. In the aftermath of the invasion of the northern part of the island by Turkey in 1974, the Xeros valley witnessed the displacement of its Turkish-Cypriot communities to the area newly under Turkish control, and the simultaneous resettlement of Greek-Cypriot refugees in the valley who had come from the occupied area.[17] Traces of these episodes of violence and conflict are still vivid in the memories of the local community and visible in the landscape, particularly in the abandoned buildings mentioned above. For the local community, the sight of these ruined and abandoned landmarks on a daily basis infuses the valley with "a negative connotation."[18]

These landmarks had never been studied through scientific archaeological approaches until 2014, when the Settled and Sacred Landscapes of Cyprus (SeSaLaC) project, a systematic, archaeological surface survey, was initiated by the University of Cyprus, led by Athanasios Vionis, Giorgos Papantoniou, and Doria Nicolaou. The project sought to identify, map, and interpret traces of human activity in the valley over the centuries to examine the interaction of secular and religious space with the natural environment. A range of informed methods of intensive field survey were employed, such as the systematic counting of pottery densities in transects running north-south throughout the survey area, aerial photography, micro-topographical surveys, and *in situ* digital recording of archaeological information and monuments. By studying the settlement system in the valley across the *longue durée*, SeSaLaC examined the Xeros River valley as a

"non-central" landscape; that is, one located at the intersection of different, neighbouring, central places in discrete periods. In doing so, SeSaLaC has enriched the debate on several topics central to Cypriot archaeology, such as political economy, settlement organisation, and diachronic social transformations.[19]

Questions related to sacred landscapes, abandonment, and memory are at the heart of the research in the Xeros River valley and central to the narrative used by the team to communicate their endeavours and to implement different community-oriented initiatives. As discussed above, the Xeros River valley is distinguished from other Cypriot and Mediterranean archaeological contexts because it is deeply rooted in the 1963–1974 interethnic conflict between the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities. SeSaLaC has enriched the knowledge of the valley's sacred landscape through archaeological survey, while also engaging with the complex intersections of the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities in recent history and the memories attached to these events.[20] The sacred landscape is evident to anyone visiting the valley, with churches and mosques from different periods defining its skyline. Most of these buildings are still in use, some have been abandoned for decades or centuries but remain active in community consciousness, while others have been entirely forgotten. Three examples serve as case studies to illustrate each of these three circumstances: the domed church of Panagia Astathkiotissa, the ruined church of Agios Herakleios, and the mosque and the associated Turkish-Cypriot cemetery of Kophinou.

An example of the recent history of a well-preserved religious building that is still in use is the fourteenth-century church dedicated to Panagia Astathkiotissa. This edifice became a place of refuge and shelter to Turkish-Cypriot shepherds in the 1960s, specifically during the years of the interethnic conflict when the Greek-Cypriots could not access the area. The shepherds inscribed their names and dates on the interior walls of this Christian monument, providing an opportunity for the team of archaeologists to record and study the Turkish-Cypriot graffiti. This documentation allowed SeSaLaC – through collaborative methods combining virtual reality technologies and cognitive psychology, memory and spatial cognition – to investigate the experience of sacred spaces by the different religious groups that have been living in the valley.

The second example is the current use of a religious building that has been abandoned but not forgotten. Today, the remains of the church of Agios Herakleios are visible and accessible on the edge of a wheat field in the outskirts of Kophinou. Next to the apse, members of the local community keep a candlestick, an incense burner, and some printed icons, testifying to the importance of the remains of this church for the Greek-Cypriots living in the valley.

Finally, an example of a standing, but abandoned and unused, religious building is the Kophinou mosque. Built in 1922 during the British colonial period in a central location at the crossroads of what used to be the centre of the village, the Kophinou mosque was the focal point of the former Turkish-Cypriot neighbourhood. With the displacement of the Turkish-Cypriot community after 1974, the

mosque and its accompanying Turkish-Cypriot cemetery – located 300 metres away – are largely abandoned and unused. As the Muslim community has moved to the Turkish occupied area of Cyprus, nobody is using the mosque today; this has affected its maintenance and preservation over time. In contrast, the cemetery has a high symbolic value for the Turkish-Cypriot community because it is the final resting place of the twenty-four Turkish-Cypriots who were killed during the 1967 conflict. For this reason, it is still visited today by Turkish-Cypriot families from the occupied north. However, some parts of the cemetery have been deliberately damaged, demonstrating that it is still a site of contention.

Engaging Multiple Communities in a Contested Valley

In a complex setting where each group carries different memories and perceptions of heritage, as well as competing interests, any engagement strategy needs to be carefully and sensitively designed. In 2018, Giorgos Papantoniou and Athanasios Vionis received funding from the European Regional Development Fund and the Republic of Cyprus through the Research and Innovation Foundation to start the "Unlocking the Sacred Landscapes of Cyprus" (UnSaLa-CY) programme, which focuses on researching the sacred landscapes of Cyprus and carrying out a series of different community-oriented outreach initiatives.[21] They began a collaboration with Andreas Lanitis of the Cyprus University of Technology, who led the development process for the release of the UnSaLa-CY app, a mobile tour application, in November 2020.[22] The purpose of the app is to engage residents, as well as international and domestic tourists, with a tour of the valley through ten points of interest (POIs), narrating the history of the landscape and the fate of religious and other monuments (Figure 12.1).[23]

The app invites users to explore the POIs by scanning QR codes mounted on permanent, informative panels with their smartphones (Figure 12.2). Once a target is identified, users can view historical information about the respective monument. In certain cases (i.e., Panagia Kophinou and Panagia Astathkiotissa), they can also access a re-creation of part of the medieval settlement through their smartphone's camera. A scoreboard tracks user progress as they visit each monument. The aim is to encourage users to complete the route by visiting all the monuments and landmarks, while simultaneously engaging with an Augmented Reality (AR) exhibition. During the tour, users are given information about the historical and archaeological context of each site and are ultimately encouraged to explore this neglected rural landscape and its collective memory imprinted into the abandoned sites and buildings (Figure 12.3).[24]

In the autumn of 2020, Athanasios Vionis and Giorgos Papantoniou also began implementing outreach activities in the Xeros River valley. The first initiative – Archaeology Days – sought to engage the local communities of Kophinou and Alaminos and marked the launch of the UnSaLa-CY app. Archaeology Days took place on 31 October and 1 November 2020; they began with an introduction to

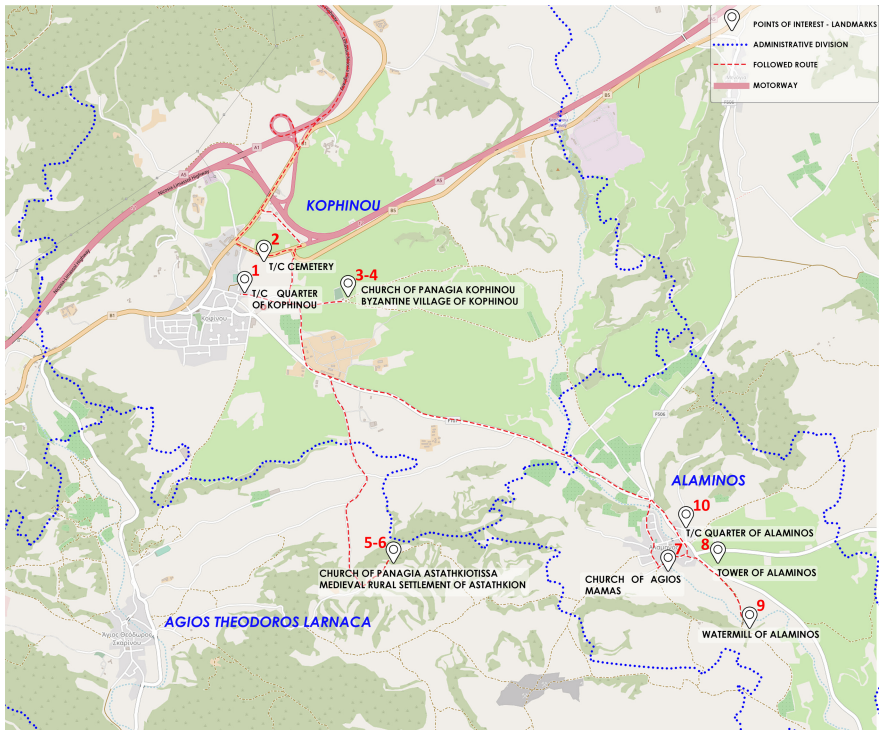
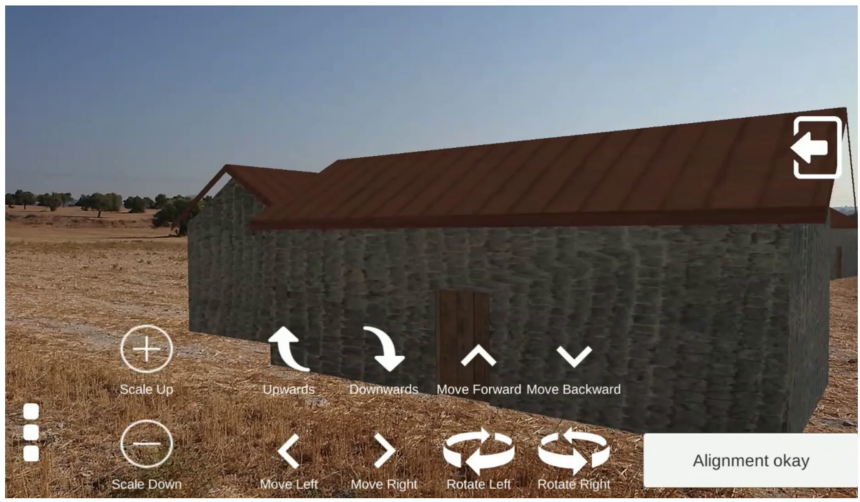


FIGURE 12.1 Map with the suggested UnSaLa-CY app cultural route in the Xeros River valley.

the SeSaLaC project and the history and archaeology of the area, followed by an educational activity on surveying methods for primary school children, and concluded with a guided tour to select religious and secular heritage places in the region.

To support the educational activity on survey methods, the team created an A4 pamphlet with information on the monuments that included a table where participants could mark the number of pottery sherds counted within their walking tract. The guided tours focused on the sites located in each village and introduced a few of the POIs available on the app. At the churches of Panagia Kophinou and Panagia Astathkiotissa, participants used the AR function to visualise the medieval settlements in the area surrounding the monuments. The success of Archaeology Days prompted the organisation of additional guided tours for postsecondary students and international tourists, allowing multiple stakeholders the opportunity to immerse themselves in the heritage sites and the historic landscape of the valley.

In addition to the app and the Archaeology Days event, the growing UnSaLa-CY network made it possible to foster further initiatives with new partners. For example,



	Hotspots	Text	Photos	3D view	AR
1	Turkish Cypriot quarter, Kophinou	☑	☑	☐	☐
2	Turkish Cypriot cemetery	☑	☑	☐	☐
3	Church of Panagia Kophinou	☑	☑	☑	☐
4	Byzantine village of Kophinou (Surroundings of Panagia Kophinou)	☑	☐	☐	☑
5	Church of Panagia Astathkiotissa	☑	☑	☑	☐
6	Medieval rural settlement of Astathkion (Surroundings of Panagia Astathkiotissa)	☑	☐	☐	☑
7	Church of Agios Mamas, Alaminos	☑	☑	☑	☐
8	Medieval tower-house, Alaminos	☑	☑	☐	☐
9	Ottoman-period watermill, Alaminos	☑	☑	☐	☐
10	Turkish Cypriot quarter, Alaminos	☑	☑	☐	☐

FIGURE 12.2 A screenshot from the UnSaLa-CY app showcasing the Augmented Reality rendition of the Byzantine Village of Kophinou (above), which also includes ten POIs of the tour proposed on the app, with the contents available for each site (below).

Adamos Papantoniou joined the UnSaLa research team as a photographer, capturing the experience of the archaeologists working in the valley and offering his perspective on memory and abandonment. Through his photos of the monuments and places of interest to the valley's recent past, he aimed to demarcate (positive or negative) collective memories attached to the valley. The UnSaLa-CY network

FIGURE 12.3 QR code at Alaminos Medieval Tower House linking to corresponding POI on the app. Photo: Giorgos Papantoniou.

supported Papantoniou's photographic exhibition "Surveying Memories," which took place at the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation in Nicosia, in the context of the Fourth Cyprus Archaeological, Ethnographic and Historical Documentary Film Festival in July 2021. The exhibition was accompanied by a public lecture by Vionis and the screening of the documentary "Settled and Sacred Landscapes in Cyprus: The Xeros River valley (Larnaca District)" directed by Stavros

Papageorgiou (Tetraktys Films).[25] The documentary made it possible to establish contact with the Bishopric of Trimythous and to organise another screening – accompanied by a presentation of the project – in the village of Agios Theodoros. After the app's release, the research team made another digital tour available on the project's website, which complements the app by providing an opportunity to plan the route and obtain basic information about the heritage sites from the comfort of one's home.[26]

Getting to Know the Participants and Their Expectations

As data-driven evaluations are scarce and the appraisal of initiatives and programmes is mainly anecdotal, the assessment of public participation in community archaeology projects is a global priority.[27] Specifically, in Cyprus, the lack of evaluation is due to the slow establishment of community archaeology as a research area and the prominence of practice over theory.[28] Unfortunately, Cyprus was not part of the "European & Archaeology" survey conducted by the NEARCH (New Scenarios for a Community-Involved Archaeology) project. The survey collected the perspectives of the European citizens on the perception of heritage and archaeology, but no such data about the views of Cypriot citizens on their participation in archaeology is available.[29] Evaluating an activity or an output is a multifaceted process that requires archaeologists to possess knowledge of research methods and tools utilised in other fields of study. Therefore, the UnSaLa-CY archaeological team collaborated with researchers from diverse backgrounds to gain in-depth insights from the Archaeology Days, the guided tours, and the app.

As the results of the Archaeology Days questionnaires have already been discussed elsewhere, we present here the approach and the main outcomes of the mixed-method evaluation of the app, carried out by Andreas Lanitis and Francesco Ripanti in August and September 2021.[30] The evaluation triangulates qualitative and quantitative data collected through three different sources: a participant observation session, an in-person survey, and an online questionnaire. The participant observation session was conducted on 25 August, 2021, at the POIs of Panagia Kofinou and the Byzantine village of Kofinou, and involved five residents who agreed to test the app. The session focused on the usability of the app and specific issues with the different POIs. The in-person questionnaire evaluated the guided tours carried out by the research team in 2021 and was distributed to all participants. Out of the 27 questions, 4 questions referred specifically to the use of the app during the guided tours.

The online questionnaire collected data on the functionality and user experience of the application, its educational impact, and avenues for possible improvements. Respondents downloaded the app, tried it out and then completed the survey. To test the usability and user experience, we included the User Experience Questionnaire in the survey – a widely used metric to measure users' subjective impressions of product usability, based on the pragmatic and hedonic quality of

the user experience through twenty-six items arranged in six scales.[31] Pragmatic quality refers to goal-oriented aspects of the experience, such as "perspicuity" (is it easy to get familiar with the product?), "efficiency" (is the interaction efficient and fast?), and "dependability" (does the user feel in control of the interaction?). Hedonic quality, on the other hand, applies to those characteristics which make the product appealing and include aspects such as "novelty" (is the product innovative and creative?) and "stimulation" (is it enjoyable to use?). While this questionnaire can be quite detailed and time-consuming, its shorter eight-item version, User Experience Questionnaire-Short Version (UEQ-S), can be included as one component of a larger survey. The UEQ-S matched the needs of the research team, as we wanted to extend data collection to questions surrounding the educational impact and suggestions for possible improvements to the app itself. The questionnaire consisted of a combination of twenty-one multiple-choice and open-ended questions. We circulated the survey through social media, and we reached 30 respondents (15 men and 15 women); the responses showed higher percentages of younger participants (18–24, 67%, and 35–44, 30%), those who were familiar with smartphone apps, and individuals who already frequented cultural heritage sites (once a month, 40%). Thus, since we are dealing with a sample that is non-representative of the total population, the analysis presented here must be considered exploratory. The UEQ-S provides a tool that automatically calculates the results of the analysis against a benchmark data set of different products.[32] For the UnSaLa-CY app, this tool reported an overall score of 1,367, which corresponds to the second level (called "Good"), meaning that 10% of the results are better than the benchmark, and 75% of the results are worse than the benchmark. Pragmatic quality scored higher (1,517) than hedonic quality (1,217).

The general picture suggested by the UEQ-S is that users found the app more informative than entertaining, and this is supported by other data collected in the online survey. Users reported that the app is informative, with respondents correctly answering the two questions about the history of the valley (34% accuracy for the first question and 45% for second question). Figure 12.4a and 12.4b, which show the entries with the highest references in the codebook, support the notion that the app is performing better as an informative tool than as an entertaining one.[33] Respondents reported that the communication of content is effective, but they think that the texts are too long and they would prefer a storytelling approach, with short narrative accounts from multiple points of view (Figure 12.4a). The open-ended answers contained in the survey suggest that the users would also like the app to navigate them through the POIs in the valley. They confirm that the app works well "to visualise the unseen settlements or the things that you cannot see such as the interior of churches," and they appreciated the quality of the photos and the text in three languages (English, Greek, Turkish). Both the in-person questionnaire and the participant observation, moreover, helped us to identify major technical issues and bugs. For example, concerns were raised about the size of the application; some buttons were not working in specific smartphones and for

a

Code	Description	Example	Mentions
Improve the navigation among sites	This code groups all those responses suggesting the improvement of the route navigation through the app.	Example: "It would be nice if the application may inform us about our next destination, the location of it and how can we reach it".	6
Suggestion of new features	This code refers to suggestion of features other than the ones already part of the app.	Example: "a hologram of one villager (for each historic period) to describe the region of each period separately".	5
Text and Storytelling	This code groups those suggestions referring to text and storytelling with the purpose of increasing the user's involvement.	Example: "I suggest to add briefer textual contents with shortcuts to longer texts".	5
Useful tool	This code collects all comments qualifying the app as a useful tool.	Example: "The app is a good initiative to know more about the area".	5

b

Code	Description	Example	Mentions
Problems with 3D reconstructions and augmented reality	This code groups comments mentioning issues about visualisation, localisation and functionality concerning the use of 3D and augmented reality.	Example: "The 3D reconstructions often appeared in the wrong location or not at all".	8
No difficulties met	This code refers to those respondents who met no difficulties in the usage of the app.	Example: "No".	3
Problems with displaying the requested monument	This code refers to a specific bug identified by some respondents. The app displays a different monument than the requested one.	Example: "I pressed to take a 3D tour in the Church but takes me to the English version of Panagia Kofinou".	3

c

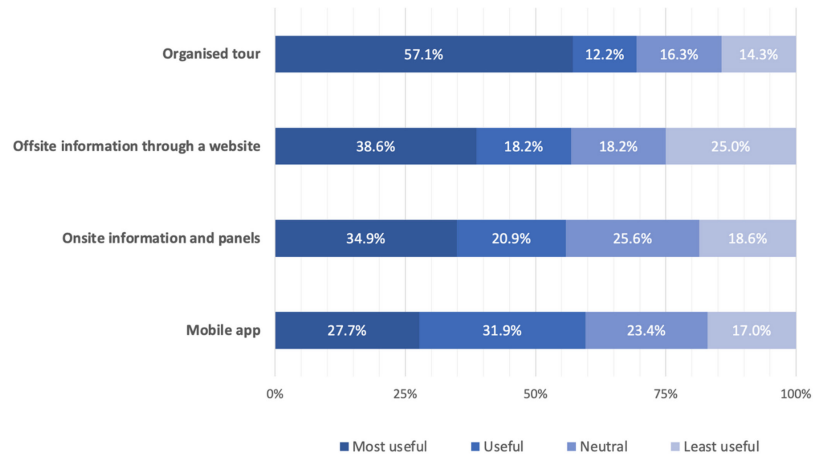


FIGURE 12.4 (a) The most cited codes in the codebook related to the open answer "Did you encounter any difficulties while using the app, or notice any bugs?" (n = 19). (b) The most cited codes in the codebook related to the open answer "Please add comments or suggestions related to the application" (n = 30). (c) Answer to the question "Which do you think is the best method of getting information about the area you visited? Please, rate the following from the most [1] to the least useful [4]" (n = 46).

specific POIs; and participants complained that the reconstructions available in AR were too dark in comparison to the background.

The results of the in-person survey (Figure 12.4c) revealed that respondents believed that the app was a useful tool (32%), although they noted that organised tours (57%), information via a website (38%), and on-site information and panels (35%) were "most useful." The development of the app is a significant addition to the project, but the results demonstrate that participants tended to look more favourably on interactions with a guide. In any case, the app can provide added value when integrated with the other initiatives, and in cases when guided tours are not available. The data collected on the functionality and user experience of the application, and the comments and remarks reported during the participant observation session, can be used in the future to release a new and improved version.

Archaeology and Well-Being

The UnSaLa-CY project has had the opportunity to achieve two objectives: to extend its commitment to community outreach and to encourage other groups to engage with the heritage of the Xeros River valley. The Linking Community Archaeology and Well-being in the Mediterranean project, or LOGGIA, is an ongoing Marie Skłodowska-Curie postdoctoral research project, led by Francesco Ripanti, that investigates how archaeology can contribute to well-being.[34] In this avenue of research, we use the term archaeology-based well-being interventions (AWIs) to refer to activities that are deliberately organised to have an impact on the well-being of participants by using archaeology-based content and activities within community archaeology programmes.[35] AWIs are usually structured as a series of activities, delivered in at least six sessions, and adapted by archaeologists and local partners to meet the needs of specific target groups. AWIs involve different groups of citizens – from children to the elderly and vulnerable groups – in activities such as excavation, survey, and post-excavation work.[36] In recent years, this type of intervention has been used in several countries around the world to incorporate groups that are normally excluded from archaeological activities, such as veterans, individuals with mental health issues, and people facing homelessness.[37] Unfortunately, only a few programmes, among which are Waterloo Uncovered in Belgium, and Operation Nightingale and Human Henge in England, have evaluated their impact.[38] In the Mediterranean, AWI is new and only the ARTEMIS-16 programme has measured its effects.[39]

To ameliorate this lack of research into community-based archaeological initiatives, LOGGIA focuses on engaging local communities and vulnerable groups and assessing how archaeology can contribute to community well-being through case-study research. The project explores Mediterranean-based projects, but places special emphasis on Italy and Cyprus, two countries where community archaeology has recently been established as a field of study.

In partnership with the Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics, the Cyprus Alliance for Rare Disorders, the three municipalities of Kophinou, Alaminos and Agios Theodoros, and the Bishopric of Trimythous, ΑρχαιοΛογικά ("ArchaioLogika"; one of the case studies of the LOGGIA project) comprised a six-session programme that consisted of tailor-made indoor and outdoor activities based on the sacred landscape of the valley (Figure 12.5). By looking at heritage sites and exploring them through creative activities, including writing and photography, the project encouraged discussions on the broader themes relating to the past, including the history of the region, memory, and abandonment. These topics are particularly relevant to our target audiences: the local communities, individuals from other areas of Cyprus, and the Huntington's disease (HD) community (users, families and carers). HD is a rare, inherited disease that causes the progressive breakdown of nerve cells in the brain and usually results in movement, thinking (cognitive) and psychiatric disorders. Abandonment and memory are at the heart of the history of the valley and central to any conversation about archaeology, but are also inevitable aspects of neurological conditions such as Huntington's, where human abandonment is felt by both the people living with the disease and their families. As AWIs have failed to include the HD community so far, the specific context of the Xeros River valley seemed an ideal setting to run a well-being programme engaging these groups with the topics of abandonment and memory.

In order to enhance community well-being, the different target groups – each with different needs and goals – gathered and worked together towards the final event of the programme, which took place on 9 December, 2023: an exhibition of photographs they had taken in the valley, depicting their perceptions of abandonment and memory, using the heritage sites as the subject of their images. In this way, the archaeologists hope to raise awareness of HD and take a small step towards transforming the valley from a place of conflict to a place of healing.

Including Stakeholders, Widening Impact

Stakeholder analysis is a tool that is typically used as a basis for decision-making processes. This method gives a voice to different groups and allows the researcher to understand their distinct needs, to prioritise these needs in relation to heritage, to analyse conflicting discourses, and to try to reach a consensus. The preliminary stakeholder analysis presented in Table 12.1 helps to explain the rationale employed by the UnSaLa-CY project in implementing its outreach and community-based initiatives. All public participation processes raise questions regarding the identification of the participants and their motives for participating. The identification of "stakeholders" – all those who have an interest in participating – helps to provide a complete framework to easily define who the stakeholders are and what their roles include. In the cultural heritage sector, stakeholders are usually divided into three categories: insiders, outsiders, and potentials.[40] Insiders are

FIGURE 12.5 Flyers from Archaeology Days (above) and the 'ΑρχαιοΛογικά' programme (below).

TABLE 12.1 Stakeholder analysis for the community activity related to the SeSaLaC project (Elaboration: Francesco Ripanti)

INSIDERS		
CATEGORY	*STAKEHOLDERS*	*INTERESTS*
Territorial authority for archaeology	Department of Antiquities	Protect and preserve the archaeological site; facilitate research
Local authorities	Municipalities of Kophinou, Alaminos, Agios Theodoros	Develop the local cultural policy; gain local support by sustaining the project
Research institutes	University of Cyprus, Trinity College Dublin	Conduct the research; train the students; share the results
Religious organisation	Bishopric of Trimythous	Preserve religious monuments; gain local support by sustaining the project
OUTSIDERS		
CATEGORY	*STAKEHOLDERS*	*INTERESTS*
Ordinary citizens	Greek-Cypriot residents, Local schools, Photographer, HD people	Discover their past and engage with it in the present through the activities proposed by the project
Ordinary citizens	International and domestic tourists	Visit the Xeros Valley and discover its heritage
Ordinary citizens	Students of archaeology	Learn survey and public archaeology on fieldwork
Local businesses	Bars, restaurants and other touristic facilities	Profit from the presence of more visitors in the valley
Other businesses	Silversky3D, Tetraktys Films	Profit by cooperating with archaeologists on projects
Research institutions	Cyprus University of Technology, CYENS	Participate in the research projects carried out in the valley
Health partners	Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics, Cyprus Alliance for Rare Disorders	Propose archaeology-based interventions to their users
POTENTIALS		
CATEGORY	*STAKEHOLDERS*	*INTERESTS*
Ordinary citizens	Turkish-Cypriot community	Know and engage with their heritage in the valley
Sport organisations	Cyclists, hikers	Visit the valley and do some sport

those who have a say in the decision-making process; outsiders are those who are often more actively involved in a project but have little-or-no say; and potentials are those stakeholders who may be involved in the future. As this is a preliminary analysis, it has not been validated by interviews or other qualitative analyses and the results do not indicate the values that stakeholders attach to heritage and sites. In the context of this chapter, it serves only as a basis for reflection, but it can be improved, corrected, and updated in the future.

The insiders in our analysis include the stakeholders that are required to be involved in any archaeological research project in Cyprus: notably, the Department of Antiquities (as the territorial authority for archaeology) and the "κοινότητες" (village communities) in which the project takes place.[41] The Bishopric of Trimythous, a religious organisation, also plays an important role, as much of the research focuses on the sacred landscape. Any research on religious structures must be agreed upon with the local archimandrite, who usually helps with logistics and facilitates coordination with other insiders. For example, during the design phase of the ΑρχαιοΛογικά programme, the archimandrite organised a meeting with representatives of the communities at the local bishopric and made suggestions for activities that might meet the interests of the local population.

The success of community programmes depends on good relations and the active support of insiders. However, it is often a challenge to connect with outsiders. These groups have an interest in archaeology, but since they have no role in the decision-making process, they are often unaware of new projects starting in their territory. This is especially relevant to a survey project like the one in the Xeros River valley, where there is no central, archaeological focal point; work, rather, takes place in the open countryside, usually in a different place every day. In contrast, an archaeological excavation is conducted at one site located in a specific place and visitors have a fixed point of reference: they can get there, visit it, embody it, and get a sense of the progress of the work, especially if there are walled structures. Instead of using one place as a central focus, the UnSaLa-CY project decided to connect with outsiders by using the entire sacred landscape as a catalyst for engaging local communities, particularly since religion plays a significant role in Cyprus. Once a strong connection has been established with some outsiders, it is easier to initiate joint collaborations and expand the network. With each new initiative, new groups are introduced to the project and to the archaeology of the valley as a whole. The UnSaLa-CY project originated with outreach activities – such as public lectures and guided tours – that engaged the local communities and schoolchildren, while the documentary and photo exhibitions provided an opportunity to reach out to people from other areas of Cyprus. The development of the app, moreover, encouraged both local and international tourists to visit the valley, who would spend more time there and bring new customers to local bars, restaurants, and facilities, benefiting the economy of the valley. Thus, the project has reached out to new audiences who would not normally have a connection to archaeology.

The last group of stakeholders, the potentials, are those who may be reached in the future; reaching potential communities is a task with many obstacles. For example, the prospective presence of cyclists and walkers in the valley would be welcome but would require a major commitment by the government to the creation of cycling and walking routes. It would also be prohibitively difficult to involve the Turkish-Cypriot community, as the Cyprus problem is still unresolved and such an initiative could cause issues with the current resident community. Nevertheless, broader community involvement in archaeology could play a role in the renegotiation of identities and memories between the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities, especially in a place like Xeros.[42] The multilingual option included in the app and online digital tour aims to engage the Turkish-Cypriot community in an effort to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the access to and enjoyment of cultural heritage.

The number of stakeholders, the amount of support they provide to a project, and their level of experience in archaeology mean that the participatory dynamic can also vary from one activity to the next. In our outreach activities such as guided tours, conferences, and the documentary video, visitors receive information from archaeologists in a top-down approach; as such, these are activities geared towards the public. In other initiatives of ours, such as the educational activities with children, the photo exhibition, or the AWIs, visitors become participants as they actively engage with archaeology. These are activities carried out together with the participants, enabling a co-creative process. By approaching the material remains of the past from a personal perspective, they can attach their own values and begin the process of meaning-making, which is characteristic of cultural heritage.[43] We believe that when all these elements work together, heritage can leave a lasting impression on stakeholders and ultimately benefit contemporary society.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we presented the rationale behind the community archaeology project developed by the UnSaLa-CY project in the Xeros River valley. This project operates in a contested valley where the material traces and memories of the conflict between the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities in the 1960s and 1970s are still evident. The initiatives under the umbrella of this larger project provide opportunities to gradually introduce new groups to the diachronic occupation of the valley through its archaeological remains, and to reconsider aspects of its painful recent history. The involvement of different groups in exploring the valley's past requires careful planning and evaluation of activities. Each group has its own expectations and sensitivities regarding unresolved aspects of its recent history or specific themes, such as abandonment. These need to be recognised, and only then can further consideration be given to whether and how archaeology can have an impact on local communities, and how activities can be designed to be more meaningful and inclusive to participants.

In this respect, the guided tours and the public lecture were helpful as a means to first approach the stakeholders. However, it was striking to see how few locals actually attended Archaeology Days: only one person from Kophinou and one from the nearby village of Agios Theodoros attended the Kophinou event, and three from Alaminos and one from Kophinou attended the Alaminos event. Most of the participants came from other areas of Cyprus. Collaborations with organisations rooted in the territory, such as the one with the Bishopric of Trimythous, may help to involve more local people. Future evaluations will clarify whether this trend will change. Although participants reported in the in-person questionnaire their preference for guided tours, they reckoned that the UnSaLa-CY app is a useful tool. They appreciated the information available for each POI, although they would have preferred a storytelling approach. The app can be combined with guided tours to raise awareness of the valley's heritage among the general public and to make standing monuments, like churches, more accessible to a wider audience, such as tourists, even outside of opening hours.

Finally, the themes of abandonment and memory make the valley suitable for the AWIs. Residents of the valley, members of the Huntington's Disease community (families, caregivers, and friends), but also people from the broader public can look at their personal stories of abandonment through the lens of the past, via an interactive activity with photographs. This approach has shown potential through pilot activities delivered within the framework of the European Huntington Association Conference in Bologna (Italy) in 2022 and in Blankenberge (Belgium) in 2023. Using photographic images related to archaeology and abandonment in the valley as a stimulus, the participants have reconsidered or reflected on some aspects of their own lives and experience, expressed in a sequential memorial process moving from landscapes to mindscapes. The underlying aim of this approach is to give everyone involved, and especially the local community, an opportunity to heal the negative memories associated with the valley by adding positive ones, emphasising how empowerment and transformation may sometimes come through abandonment. Ultimately, the project has explored how archaeology can contribute to contemporary societal problems by offering new perspectives, encouraging active participation of groups normally excluded, and leaving a lasting impression on the people involved.

Notes

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2 Council of Europe 2005.

3 Moussouri 2014, 11.
4 Nissinaho and Soininen 2014; Doyle 2017.
5 Faulkner 2000.
6 Reid 2012.
7 Nizzo 2015.
8 Moser et al. 2002.
9 Atalay 2012. See also discussion by Abd el-Gawad, Chapter 3, this volume.
10 For examples of negative outcomes of community archaeology projects on communities and professionals, see Sayer 2022.
11 More information on these issues can be found in Benetti and Santacroce 2019; and Benetti et al. 2022.
12 Thomas 2017.
13 Moshenska and Dhanjal 2012.
14 Almansa-Sánchez 2022, 18.
15 Ripanti (forthcoming). The development of community archaeology projects is a complex process consisting of several stages. In the Xeros River Valley, the first stage has seen archaeologists engaging with stakeholders through outreach events and raising awareness of the research being undertaken. In the second stage, the archaeologists expanded the activities and their network of stakeholders, and in the third stage they actively involved participants in the activities carried out in partnership with the LOGGIA project, covering the full range of participation that is typical of community archaeology.
16 Ioannou et al. 2021; Vionis et al. 2023.
17 For more information on the recent history of the Xeros River valley, see Vionis et al. 2023.
18 The ruined and abandoned landmarks remind the local community of the episodes of violence and conflict that have taken place in the valley, and of their condition as refugees in their own country. Personal Communication, modern inhabitants of the Xeros Valley, July 2015. Names omitted for requested anonymity.
19 Papantoniou and Vionis 2018, 157.
20 Vionis 2022.
21 Papantoniou 2019, 6.
22 UnSaLa-CY app 2023. The Research and Innovation Centre on Interactive Media, the Smart System and Emerging Technologies (CYENS) Centre of Excellence, Silversky3D VRT Ltd, and the Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts of the Cyprus University of Technology were all involved in the production of the app.
23 Ioannou et al. 2021. A demonstration of the AR system in action is available in the video at: https://tinyurl.com/yyrgd6mj.
24 For other digital approaches to religious communities in the Mediterranean, see Canlas et al., this volume.
25 The documentary is available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ojzCEU_rMQ.
26 Settled and Sacred Landscapes of Cyprus (SeSaLaC) 2023.
27 McDavid 2014, 1594; Ellenberger and Richardson 2018.
28 Ripanti 2022, 16–20.
29 NEARCH was an EU-funded project aiming to explore the various dimensions of public participation in contemporary archaeology and aimed to bring new ways of working and collaborating to the field, on which, see Marx et al. 2017.
30 Vionis et al. 2023.
31 Schrepp et al. 2017a.
32 Schrepp et al. 2017b.
33 A codebook was created based on open-ended questions contained in the survey using the qualitative data analysis computer software Nvivo. It offers a glimpse of what users expect from the app.

34 Everill et al. 2020.
35 Sayer 2018.
36 Darvill et al. 2019; Osgood 2023.
37 In the United Kingdom, Kiddey (2017) worked with homeless people, Darvill (2019) with people with mental health issues, Osgood (2023) with veterans.
38 Darvill 2019; Everill et al. 2022; Ulke 2021.
39 Ulke (2022) worked in Cyprus with military personnel and members of civic society.
40 Castillo 2015, 65.
41 "Κοινότητες" (koinotites; "communities") identify the authority of the area of the three villages of the Xeros River valley, which have a different organisation from the municipalities.
42 Papantoniou et al. 2019, xv.
43 Smith and Waterton 2009, 44.

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13

THE DATABASE OF RELIGIOUS HISTORY AND RESPONSIBLE GLOBAL SCHOLARSHIP

Gino Canlas, Julian Weidemann, Andrew Danielson, Ian Randall, and M. Willis Monroe

Introduction[1]

Digital humanities platforms open new avenues for responsible global scholarship.[2] When these are made open access, such platforms can bypass the paywalls and institutional barriers that limit access to scholarly resources outside of privileged universities in the Global North.[3] New models of recruitment and data collection can broaden the range of contributors accorded the status of "experts," and cross-disciplinary methods can open platforms to a vast number of scholars. One example of a platform that follows these imperatives is the Database of Religious History (DRH),[4] an international digital humanities project based at the University of British Columbia (UBC).[5] The DRH aims to study the history of religion across the entire globe for the entirety of human experience (Figure 13.1). This article discusses how team members of the DRH address the role of open scholarship responsibly in the realm of open-access, digitally native projects.

The DRH takes on a global reach in three distinct ways: the first is that it is globally accessible through its open-access digital nature, the second is that is that its interface is multi-lingual to reach a wider non-English-speaking audience, and finally, the third the scope of the research spans the globe and all historical periods in order to meet the research and analytic needs of a wider community of scholars. The first and second goals of the DRH ensure that the project interests a diverse group of scholars, and likewise is able to benefit from their (equally diverse) expertise. The third goal relates to the actual design of the database and the method through which data is collected. The naturally large scope of the project necessitates a domain-agnostic vocabulary to reach scholars from a broad range of disciplines. In order for its data to maintain coherence, it is necessary that scholars are able to find common ground within the framework of the project.

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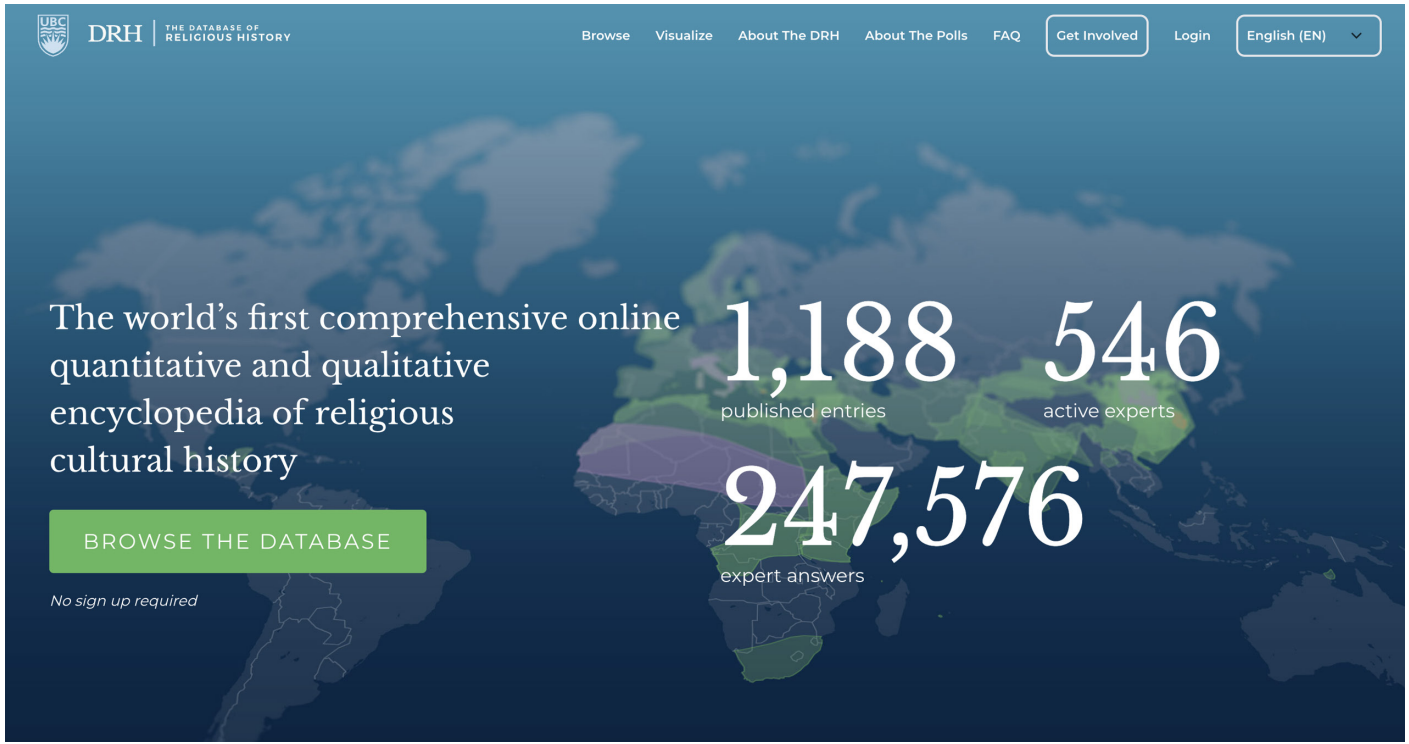

FIGURE 13.1 The landing page of the Database of Religious History website (as of October 2023).

This is a challenging task and much of our work as a research collective is spent meeting with and understanding the needs of domain specialists.

To address the ways in which the DRH engages a global audience responsibly, we outline the interdisciplinary origins and basic infrastructure of the project. We then address the methodology behind data collection and the fundamental epistemologies of the project, as well as the ways in which scholars and the public can make use of the DRH website. We conclude with a section on key contributions and future prospects for responsible global scholarship using the DRH.

The Database of Religious History

The DRH grew out of cross-disciplinary conversations at UBC between psychologists, social scientists, economists, and historians of religion.[6] When brainstorming this platform, the goal of the scholars who first initiated it was to provide a resource for the large-scale study of the history and trends in religious experience from the earliest preserved evidence up to the present day. While initially envisioned as an experimental test bed for investigating cultural evolutionary models – an inherently interdisciplinary research question – the project has since widened its scope to address a range of research methods and questions while also remaining open to future forms of analysis.[7] "Religion" here is used in its broadest sense, which is reflected in the scope of the database.[8] The project is further envisioned as an active, up-to-date reference tool for scholars of religion, a classroom tool, and a host for specialised datasets. The DRH is likewise committed to adapting and responding to the needs of audiences as the project develops. The project solicits feedback on its data gathering methods from a global network of scholars, including institutions underrepresented in Anglo-European academia, while also adding new language translations of the website to reach scholars working in non-Anglophone contexts.[9]

Even though the project is housed physically and virtually in the Global North, the open-access nature of the DRH makes it accessible to scholars worldwide. The project is physically based at UBC in the department of Philosophy under the directorship of Professor Edward Slingerland. However, the project is virtually hosted in the cloud, on Amazon Web Services. Regular backups are kept both in the cloud and on UBC's campus. All data from the project is archived by the UBC Library in an open-access repository and the initial funding was provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for the development of the project.[10] More recently, the project has published its first open-access curated data release on the Zenodo platform (an EU-funded repository for academic outputs).[11] Academic experts (our contributors who complete the polls on the website) are recruited from across the globe, and the DRH's editorial team is similarly widely dispersed.[12] The editors, as experts in particular subfields and regions, are well placed to recruit contributors, especially from institutional settings distant from the Euro-American universities that tend to monopolise knowledge production.

Our recruitment process is largely opportunistic. The various editors identify scholars who specialise in a part of the world (who may not necessarily specialise in religion) and invite them (usually via email) to sign up on the website by creating an account, choosing an editor, and then creating a poll. The editors may also receive unsolicited applications by experts who have heard about the project. Generally, the experts recruited by our editors can be within our own professional networks but they are also often identified by scrolling through bibliographies, searches on university department websites, Academia.edu and Researchgate, and other social media platforms. The project has a regular presence at the American Academy for Religion annual conference and has hosted workshops and recruitment events at other conferences. The recruited experts can also be graduate students recommended by their advisors or scholars referred by their colleagues. Once they have identified a topic on which they wish to create an entry, the editors guide them through the process of answering a poll.

To facilitate the legibility of our data across a range of contexts, the project is structured around a large set of binary answers ("yes"/"no"/"I don't know"/"field doesn't know") to an extended questionnaire (400–500 questions) concerning religious groups, religious places, or religious texts. These sets of questions/answers are referred to in the DRH as "polls." Arranging data in this manner allows for a modular format, a uniform mold that guides the work of experts regardless of their primary language or intellectual training. Yet, while organising data, our framework also allows experts significant latitude. One can skip any question. A "notes" function allows experts to provide qualitative remarks that often serve as a means for critical reflection on the parameters of a given question. This data structuring has allowed the DRH to host a growing array of content: the project, as of September 2024, holds over 355,000 independent answers in its database, corresponding to over 1,600 published entries and 637 scholars active with the project as contributors and editors.[13]

The Methodology

The database is structured around individual answers to sets of questions; in this way, it differs from a traditional encyclopedia or Wiki that consists solely of written entries on a particular topic. Each answer is assigned a date range and geographical set of one or more polygons; a set of answers by an expert then constitutes an entry for the project. Each answer is generally binary in nature ("Yes" versus "No," with the additional options for "Field doesn't know," or "I don't know"). Examples of questions include: "Are supernatural beings present?"; "Is there monumental architecture?"; and "Do supernatural beings mete out rewards/punishment?" The responses to these questions form the poll itself. In addition to the required questions and their binary answers that remain consistent across all polls, experts can also choose to provide a written description of their topic, qualitative comments, images, and bibliographies for further research. These features

of a DRH poll are intended to maximise the legibility of any given entry across linguistic, regional, temporal, and interpretive contexts.

Each poll in the database consists of a title (available in multiple languages, with options for aliases), an overall description for the entry, a map of the relevant geographic area, and a chronological delineation (Figure 13.2). Further, each poll can select from a number of thematic "tags" to highlight characteristics of the entry that allows it to be linked to other entries with similar characteristics or geographic overlap. All polls in the database share a core set of common questions, so by answering one questionnaire experts provide (some) answers to other, related questionnaires in the system.[14] This linkage between questions allows the DRH to widen the scope of data collection to make it accessible for the broad range of scholars potentially interested in the project, while tightly knitting the underlying data together. For example, a scholar primarily familiar with textual material can query the database to find answers to related questions from other types of sources entered by scholars operating in other disciplines (i.e., archaeology, anthropology).

After an expert has completed an entry, their editor reviews it and suggests corrections to ensure academic rigour in all our entries, in the same way that other online projects, like Digital Hammurabi Press, also ensure some form of peer review.[15] Once an entry has been published, researchers can read the poll individually, or they can use the "Browse" and "Visualize" tools to query entries, tags, comments, and regions to examine trends in any aspect of religion stored in the database (Figure 13.3). These tools, all open access, produce a map-based visualisation of their query and users can use the "Animate" feature to see how the map changes over time. These tools allow users to visualise the data either as polygons on a map or as a heatmap that highlights patterns in the data geographically. Visitors to the site can also choose a "Table" view that gives detailed information about the individual entries, experts, and comments relevant to a given query. The DRH team has published a number of articles on analyses conducted on the quantitative data, which is accessible to any scholar upon inquiry.[16]

The current structure of the DRH organises these polls into three types. The first type is "Group entries," which encompasses any grouping of humans that has an identifiable shared practice or belief (e.g., a denomination, a religious group, an ethnic group). The second type is "Place entries," which focus on any tangible structure related to an aspect of religion; this may include shrines, temples, churches, mosques, burials, and so on. The third type, "Text entries," broadly covers any type of scripture, hymn, mythology, dedicatory inscription, or any written material that might be relevant to the study of religion. Moreover, intentionally designed overlap in the questions between separate polls, allows them to be linked on the backend of the database (the part of the system architecture that stores most data and operating syntax) for broader quantitative analyses. While centred around religious history, the wide-ranging nature of the questions in the polls allows scholars to engage with questions related to the human experience

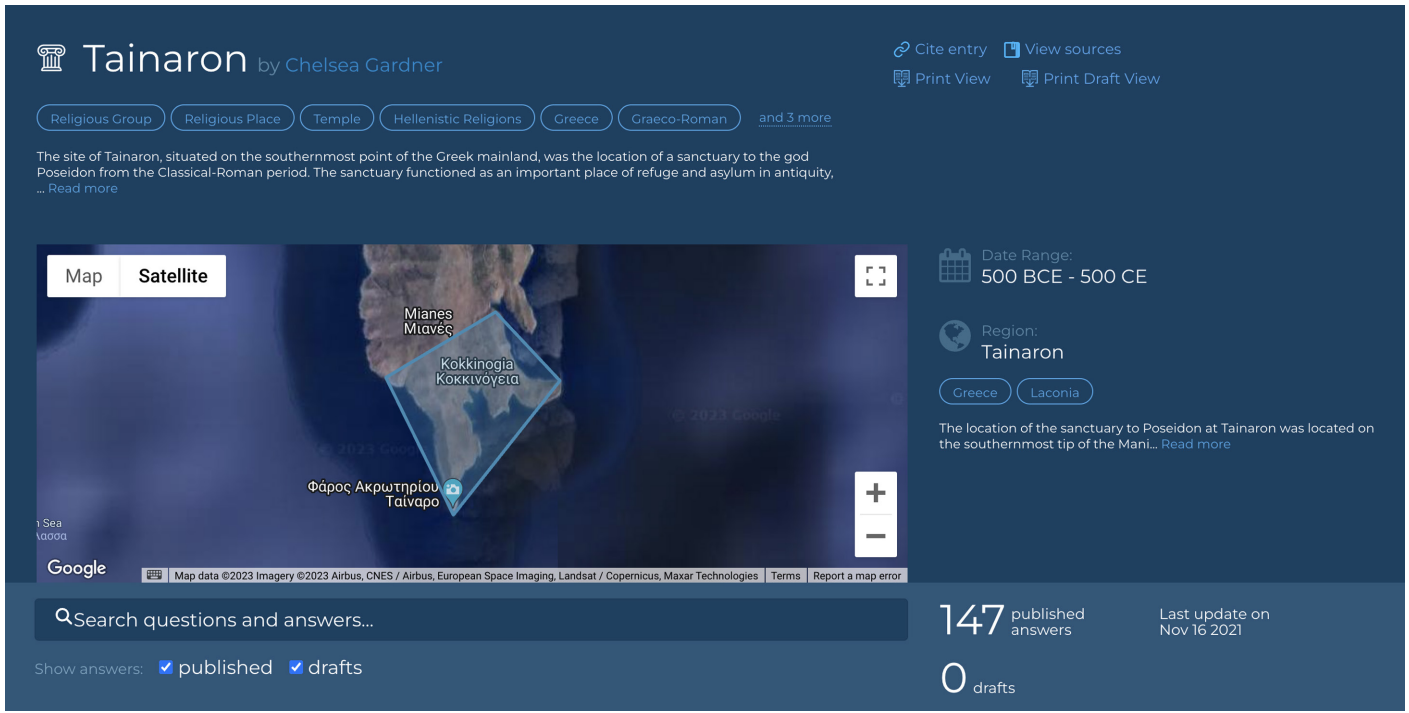

FIGURE 13.2 The contextual information at the beginning of a published DRH entry (image: an entry on "Tainaron" by Peopling the Past's Chelsea Gardner, 2021).

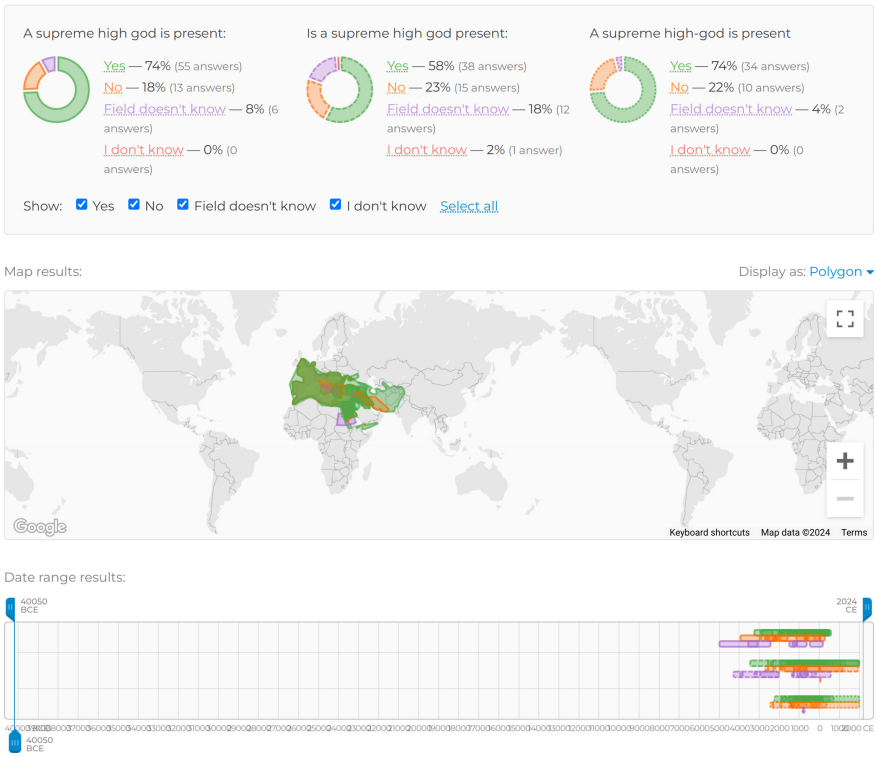

FIGURE 13.3 An example of using the Visualise tool within the DRH, testing the query "A supreme high god is present" in the Mediterranean and the Near East.[17]

that are not strictly related to religion (welfare, bureaucracy, food storage, societal institutions, taxation enforcement, food production, education); this is likewise of great utility when considering the embeddedness of "religious activity" within the broader human experience.

Responsible Global Scholarship

As the Digital Mary Project has encountered, the "democratisation"of knowledge in open-access scholarship necessitates confronting our own projects' embedded power structures.[18] For all the ambitions of the DRH, it is difficult to achieve a responsible form of global engagement, especially beyond the parameters of an Anglophone academy centred around universities based in the Global North. In the following section, we discuss how the project has wrestled with key challenges related to recruitment of experts, language, and editorial curation of data.

The DRH's interest in recruiting scholars from outside Euro-American universities initially stemmed from the research interests of the project director, Edward Slingerland, who specialises in early Chinese religion and philosophy. His research network provided an avenue for recruiting scholars from Chinese institutions. Based on this experience, the DRH has adopted a model of using area specialists to recruit contributors from universities in the national and regional contexts with which they are familiar. For example, two authors of this chapter, Gino Canlas and Ian Randall, archaeologists who work in Greece and Cyprus, have recruited scholars from Greek and Cypriot institutions. Another co-author, Julian Weideman, a historian of modern North Africa, has recruited historians working at Tunisian and Algerian universities. The authors acknowledge that none of us are indigenous to those regions and that we are all based in institutions in the Global North, which could bias our recruitment towards our own professional networks. However, our familiarity with these regions provides us with an opportunity to include scholars who are not as well-known outside of their respective countries.

This recruitment model has had some success. While the majority of DRH contributors and editors are still based in North America and Western Europe, an ever-growing number of experts are from regions including North Africa, Eastern Europe, Central and South America, and East and Southeast Asia, all of which are historically underrepresented in the academy (comprising at least 25% of the total number of experts).[19] In large part, the open-access, digital, nature of the database is what allows its user base to expand and include such underrepresented regions. The DRH does not require users to sign up to use the website; anyone can browse the database and use its tools for free. As such, we do not collect data on the website's users, but Google Analytics demonstrate that our reach has indeed become global and is being used on every continent (see Figure 13.4).

The DRH also provides opportunities for people outside of traditional academia to have a voice in the creation of data. Although the DRH editors have some general guidelines concerning who to recruit (primarily scholars with PhDs and advanced graduate students), there remain opportunities to reach out to people beyond traditional university contexts, such as indigenous elders, members of religious communities, and archaeologists from local administrations who are not affiliated with universities.[20] Similarly, the DRH recognises that the research work of scholars is often unpaid, and for early career scholars and those in contingent forms of employment, the burden and pressure to publish is significant.[21] As a result, and out of respect for the time and expertise of contributing authors, the project provides a modest honorarium. The amount paid per entry is the same regardless of the location or employment status of the expert.

Of course, the DRH's one-time honorarium payments to contributors are insufficient to address the structural problems in today's academy. These include an increasing reliance on the labour of precarious academic workers (e.g., graduate students and non-tenure track faculty), erosion of public funding for universities,

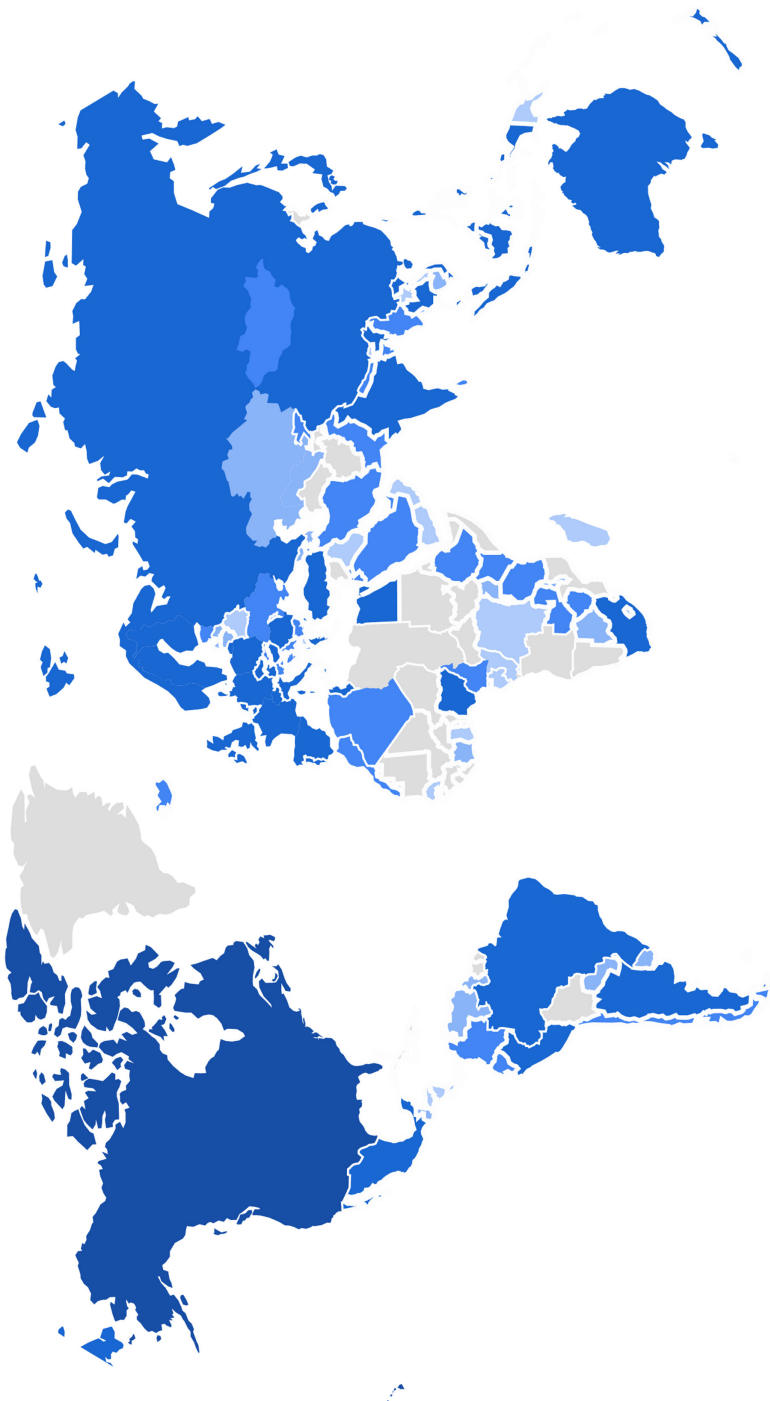

FIGURE 13.4 A global heatmap of users of the DRH over the past year, according to the DRH's Google Analytics page.

and paywalls standing in the way of free access to knowledge.[22] Scholars based in the Global South face particular barriers, including, in many cases, fundamental restrictions on freedom of movement because of visa requirements to attend conferences or conduct research in North America or Europe. Given the scale of these problems, the DRH honorarium may seem insufficient, falling well short of the ambition to "decolonize DH."[23] Still, our systematic commitment to paying authors no matter their location is a rare measure given ongoing reliance on unpaid labour in both DH communities and academia more broadly. In this volume, projects such as the Digital Mary Project and the Peopling the Past also share this commitment to compensating contributors and emphasise the need for compensation to be an integral part of funding structures.[24] A Global North currency, such as the Canadian dollar, can offer substantial value in some national contexts, especially in the Global South. Overall, the DRH honorarium represents a tangible, if insufficient, contribution to responsible global scholarship.

An example of our work in the global south comes from the North African context. In the 2022–2023 academic year, the DRH recruited six active contributors from universities in Tunisia and Algeria. These scholars advance responsible global engagement in several ways. First, they write their entries in French and Arabic, languages that are to different degrees underrepresented in an English-language dominated global academia. Second, they work at universities that are relatively disconnected from European, North American, and Australasian institutions. Third, relevant to the theme of Mediterranean studies, as North Africa-based historians, these scholars allow the DRH to engage with an area of the Mediterranean – the southern shore as opposed to European contexts – that canonical narratives of the medieval to modern periods often overlook.

In line with these considerations, questions surrounding language and translation are crucial to the DRH. Recognising that the English language holds hegemonic status in academic publishing in the twenty-first century,[25] the DRH initially sought to tackle this problem through a multilingual interface, with a full Chinese- and French-language version of the website and all polls, alongside the default English-language version. Technical problems – many related to the rapid expansion and evolution of the default English-language interface – have held back these translations, though the project continues to pursue them. Separately, the project is expanding to include Japanese, Spanish, and Arabic, along with other languages as the needs of our expert community dictate (Figure 13.5).

While these direct translations of the website require time to implement, the English-language version of the website itself has scope for multilingualism, enabled by the modular format of the questionnaires. Editors encourage experts to provide the written parts of their entries in whatever language they feel most comfortable. This is a key feature that allows scholars within a discipline to use native terms across all entries.[26] The DRH recognises that scholarship is thriving outside the "West" in a multitude of languages, perspectives, and academic traditions, and thus the DRH editors actively recruit experts all over the world, communicating to

FIGURE 13.5 A comment in Arabic (a currently unsupported language in the DRH) in a "poll" entry written by Bou Ali Malika (2023).

potential experts in several languages other than English.[27] We hope to provide a global platform for scholars whose works often do not have a global reach because they cannot publish in English.

Finally, it is necessary to address the challenges in managing an open-access, online, quantitative, and qualitative repository of data on religious history that is sufficiently academically rigorous to be used in scholarly and academic contexts. In an area of study such as religion, which spans a vast array of disciplines with their own academic terminology, certain questions in the database can be interpreted differently by scholars in different fields. For example, in the context of Greece, experts could answer the question "Is the supreme high god unquestionably good?" several ways, as the supreme high god in most contexts would be Zeus. The deity is portrayed as a philanderer in most mythological representations but those are not always depicted the same way in cult. The expert can answer "Yes" or "No" depending on what they deem to be the better answer, and ideally, they would defend their response in the "Comment" feature. It is the duty of the DRH editors to make sure that experts understand the intent behind each question while also allowing for differing interpretations of the questions. Attempts have been made to minimise the use of jargon in the questionnaires and to take a broad approach to big concepts such as "religion," a term with contested definitions (including debates on whether or not the term should be defined at all).[28]

Fundamentally, the DRH follows J.Z. Smith's oft-quoted statement: "there is no data for religion. Religion is solely the creation of the scholar's study. It is created for the scholar's analytic purposes by his imaginative acts of comparison and generalization. Religion has no existence apart from the academy."[29] All of the DRH data is, in fact, only the observations of our experts. Because of the difficulty converting rich historical data into the quantitative forms that the project records, the DRH acknowledges the need for nuanced answers within individual polls. For instance, how does a scholar arrive at a "Yes" for a specific question, how many sources (primary or secondary) are needed for a firm answer? For this reason, experts are encouraged to make use of the "Comment" feature on individual questions, wherein they can explain the rationale behind their answers. Experts can also choose to answer a question multiple times, changing the geographical area and/or time period for each answer.

Nonetheless, the editors do provide light gatekeeping – mostly to ensure that there is some standardisation in the way questions are understood and addressed

by experts. It is not the editor's prerogative to filter out opinions or people, and if an expert and an editor disagree on an answer to a question on the poll, an expert can defend their opinion in the "Comment" feature, adding citations and bibliography. We aim to promote multivocality by allowing different experts, from different groups and academic traditions, to create entries on the same topic but with different answers. For example, the DRH currently holds several "group" entries on the Essene community at Qumran of the late first millennium BCE Levant[30] as well as additional "text" entries related to that community.[31] Through the overlapping and intersecting themes of these entries, diverse voices and interpretations related to the same topic can be recorded and contribute to broader scholarly discussions.

Conclusion

To conclude, the above discussion has outlined a few of the areas of consideration with which the Database of Religious History has dealt. The project, now in its twelfth year, has accrued a considerable amount of experience building, growing, and sustaining DH project with a global focus in content and audience. We have realised that for a project hoping to collect data on global religious traditions, the DRH must engage scholars from across the globe. Doing so requires considering how the project is accessible in a variety of languages. Similarly, it is also necessary to be mindful of varying academic environments and the metrics around how performance and advancement are measured, as well as the vastly different financial situations in which scholars find themselves. Widening the constituency of scholars involved in the project is a core driving consideration of the DRH and involves a considerable number of secondary considerations. If scholars involved in the project are coming from a wider array of backgrounds, they need to be able add their expertise to the database, while also allowing the project to maintain some form of standardisation. To this end the questionnaires are designed through a collaborative process to be broadly applicable to a wide variety of disciplines and cultural traditions. The DRH has the lofty goal of trying to record everything about religion across the globe from the beginning of human experience until the present. This is a target that can never feasibly be met, but any useful attempt must surely be global in nature. By opening up the project's recruitment, method of data collection, and interface, the DRH attempts to foster an open platform where scholars from across the globe can contribute to and use a constantly growing collection of data about religious history.

Notes

1 The DRH would like to thank all our editors and experts for all their contributions, and without whom we would have no database.
2 O'Sullivan 2022; Gerber 2022; Golding and Murdock 2004.
3 Gairola 2022; Hunter 2015; Risam 2018.

4 Funding through 2024 is generously supplied by John Templeton Foundation: #6183.
5 Database of Religious History: http://www.religiondatabase.org. See also Slingerland et al. 2023.
6 https://hecc.ubc.ca/hecc/participating-researchers/.
7 For an example of the type of analysis that inspired the DRH, see Norenzayan 2016.
8 The DRH's approach to the definition of religion is included in Slingerland 2019, 212.
9 The entirety of the interface is translated. The only parts of the website that do not get translated are the comments that are left by experts in their own entries.
10 Slingerland and Sullivan 2017.
11 Poulsen et al 2024, https://zenodo.org/records/12572187.
12 For the current list of DRH editors, see https://religiondatabase.org/landing/about/people/editors.
13 The editorial committee currently consists of 35 editors who oversee recruitment of contributors, quality of entries, and publication of data. There are also five postdoctoral research fellows based at UBC, who are required to devote more of their time to editorial duties than the other editors.
14 For instance, the Religious Group poll asks, "Is there special treatment of adherents' corpses?," the Place poll asks "Is this a place for treatment of the corpse?," and finally the Text poll similarly asks "Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses dictated in the text?" All three of these questions are related in the database schema such that a query for one would find answers to the other two.
15 Funke et al., this volume. However, whereas the Digital Hammurabi Press ensures that what they publish reflects consensus scholarship, our experts do not always choose to answer our polls with responses that necessarily reflect consensus, as many things in the study of religion can often be contentious.
16 For recent articles published by the DRH team and others, see Slingerland et al. 2023; Danielson et al. 2022; Spicer et al. 2022; Beheim et al. 2021.; Wormley and Cohen 2021; and Monroe et al. 2023.
17 The following query may be viewed at: https://religiondatabase.org/visualize/3914/.
18 Higgins et al., this volume.
19 This percentage does not include experts who are affiliated with a university or other institution in North America and Western Europe but are physically based in countries elsewhere (as that data are not publicly available), nor does it include independent researchers who have not publicly listed their home countries.
20 The project recognises that there are forms of knowledge about the history of religious practice globally that are not necessarily only taught and enacted through academic practice. The project is open to collaboration with non-traditional scholars of religion who can contribute to the project.
21 Gardner and Austen, this volume, also address the reliance on unpaid labour by open-access websites such as Wikipedia.
22 Accounts of the neoliberal university include Kezar, DePaola, and Scott 2019; and Hall 2016.
23 On decolonising DH, see Risam 2018.
24 Higgins et al., this volume.
25 For a nuanced discussion of English-language dominance in scholarship, see Gnutzmann 2008, and for a critique of the geopolitical assets of the Digital Humanities and Anglo-American monopoly on the academic discourse on the topic, see Fiormonte 2012.
26 For example, both English and Chinese speaking scholars can refer to 天 (*tiān*, "heaven") in their entries. Both groups can search for the same shared term and find the relevant data.
27 The authors of this chapter alone (all DRH editors) have previously recruited using Greek, French, Arabic, Spanish, and Italian (in addition to English), as a means of communication.

28 For previous debates on the definition of religion, see Durkheim 1912; Renfrew 2007; Geertz 1966; and Bulbulia et al. 2004.
29 Smith 1982.
30 Jokiranta 2019; Bay 2019.
31 Shirav 2022; Eliff 2022.

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14

REIMAGINING THE DIGITAL MARY PROJECT AS A COUNTER-PRACTICE WITHIN/AGAINST THE NEOLIBERAL UNIVERSITY

Sabrina C. Higgins, Aurora E. Camaño, and Michael R. Laurence

Introduction

The rise to prominence of the digital humanities at precisely the same historical moment as the emergence of neoliberal technologies and strategies of governance within (and beyond) the university presents both a problem and an invitation to thought.[1] How does the field of digital humanities function in relation to the structures and mechanisms of power and domination that characterise the present? Do the digital humanities constitute, on the whole, something like a scholarly arm of techno-capitalism or is the reality more complicated, multi-faceted, and contested? Without a doubt, there are powerful tendencies and forces within the field that work to uphold and reproduce neoliberal structures and practices, in particular: the pervasiveness of entrepreneurial ideology within the digital humanities, the close link between the field and major tech corporations like Google and Microsoft (as evident through structures of funding and the sharing of tools and platforms),[2] and a dominant focus on building technical tools at the expense of critically analysing and confronting existing power relations and inequalities. What happens, then, when you construct a digital humanities project – in our case, the Digital Mary Project – within such a problematic and dangerous space? How do you move forward when you realise that your project exists explicitly as an archival tool and lacks the framework necessary to facilitate and support critical humanistic thought within the disciplines related to ancient Mediterranean studies? What happens when your own project is complicit in the production of the power dynamics that structure the neoliberal university? How do you confront these problems after the design is complete? And how do you create a counter-practice that embraces a more progressive, radical approach to the digital humanities?

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In this chapter, we confront our own entanglement with the neoliberal forces and imperatives that are pervasive in the field of digital humanities through an engagement with current theoretical and critical discourses. We do so in the hopes of forging a new path for a reimagined Digital Mary Project, while also reflecting on the shortcomings inherent in the initial design of the project and the ways in which we might engage in a more critical dialogue within the contested digital spaces we inhabit. Ultimately, we agree with Miriam Posner that there is radical, unrealised potential within the digital humanities.[3] This radical potential is already in the making: it is concretely visible in the work of feminist, Trans, and Queer groups, radical communities of colour, contingent academics and graduate students, and all those who work and organise together in solidarity against the forces of neoliberal reaction.[4] These groups have long worked across, within, and against digital networks, constituting the labour of what we might call a "digital undercommons."[5] The radical potential of the digital humanities is visible in the collective and political construction of these communities of difference.[6] Difference, in this sense, is not another name for diversity,[7] but rather, the name of a politics of counter-practice that ruptures the sensible (i.e., that which is taken as natural and self-evident); it is a differentiation or setting apart, a disidentification which gives birth to new modes of seeing, knowing, and being.[8] It is within this framework that we attempt to re-envision the ways in which the Digital Mary Project might engage in these kinds of counter-practices and provide an opening for other projects situated within the broader field of ancient Mediterranean studies to do the same.

Digital Humanities and Neoliberalism

The digital humanities constitute a political field. This is to say that its future as a field is not settled. Its social relevance and functioning are not predetermined but, rather, subject to ongoing contestation between multiple forces.[9] While the forces and imperatives of neoliberalism are pervasive and formidable, they are not unassailable. We define neoliberalism as a parasitical and anti-social institutional framework which aims to extend the dominance of capitalist markets into all spheres of life.[10] To this end, neoliberal ideology seeks to interpellate us all as micro-entrepreneurs of ourselves, by inciting us to conduct ourselves as if we were freelance micro-enterprises.[11] This occurs in the context of widespread attacks on public services, labour rights, and social welfare.[12] The logic of the market is forcefully extended and used to reprogram and restructure both institutions and subjects, laying waste to the body, the psyche, the social, the public sphere, the earth, and the future itself.[13] As fundamentally parasitical and destructive, it is necessary for neoliberalism to wear a mask, to *hide* behind an army of cliches and buzzwords, behind a complex ideological formation that functions to code coercion as freedom and destruction as progress. This ideological formation and its vocabulary of freedom, openness, innovation, flexibility, and collaboration is pervasive throughout the digital humanities.

The digital humanities appear as a proliferation of disparate projects, each extending into digital space without temporal limits. In this way, the disciplinary form of the digital humanities is, at its core, neoliberal. This point requires some explaining. Under neoliberalism, we are invited to no longer view ourselves as subjects, or as individuals subjected to coercive power. Instead, we are invited to see ourselves as "projects," free to perpetually invent and reinvent ourselves.[14] This supposed freedom, however, turns out to be its opposite; a ruthless compulsion towards optimisation and achievement.[15] With the pressure for those within the digital humanities to continuously produce projects, academics are thus positioned in a highly competitive and ruthless scenario, a kind of "survival of the fittest" situation, wherein they are compelled to become micro-entrepreneurs of themselves and their projects, hunt and battle for funding, and take part in the production of their own (and others') precarity and contingency as workers.[16] Digital humanities projects are often built upon the aspirational labour of precarious faculty and graduate students, many of whom hope to find permanent employment within inhospitable institutions that have moved almost entirely into a contingent and contract-based labour model. Even more, under the guise of public participation, these projects often seek to expand, capture, and incorporate the results of the cognitive labour of the general public – without recognising it as labour or compensating members of the public for their labour. The general public, then, becomes a standing reservoir of cognitive labour, or general intellect, to be exploited under the ideological cover of appeals to inclusion, democratising knowledge, public-facing scholarship, and so on. Consequently, the public function of research is undermined by means of its reduction to a series of competitive and semi-privatised projects grounded in the exploitation of precarious and unrecognised labour.[17]

In this highly competitive and exploitative context, the wilful adoption of neoliberal aims and vocabulary becomes a survival tactic within the university, a way in which academics can sell themselves and their projects more successfully on the academic market. Kirschenbaum speaks of the digital humanities in "capitalist realist" terms, as a tactic for getting things done in a difficult space, a kind of "jiu jitsu" for getting new colleagues hired, securing funding, launching a lab or a centre.[18] However, the digital humanities also function as a vector for placing the humanities at the forefront of the agendas of entrepreneurship, openness, public engagement, collaboration, big data, and so on.[19] Kirschenbaum claims his perspective is not cynical, but it expresses a kind of deflationary realism in which neoliberal capitalist imperatives are accepted and adopted in exchange for the prerogatives of funding, hiring, relevance, and utility. He shows that, in the process, the neoliberalisation of the university is carried out not only by high-minded deans and administrators armed with mandates and buzzwords, but through the tactical realism of academics themselves.

Perhaps, the most dominant feature of neoliberal ideology within the digital humanities, however, is less a tactical or cynical realism than a generic and

broadly pervasive techno-utopianism. This can be defined as the fetishisation of digital technologies as neutral, technical entities – tools emptied of their constitutive political, economic, and social relations/contexts. Techno-utopianism appears here as a vision of frictionless data sharing, where print capitalism and its repressive regime of private ownership are blown apart and surpassed by openness, transparency, collaboration, and digital access.[20] The juxtaposition between the old, repressive humanities of the analogue age and the new, open, and innovative humanities of the digital age is the founding *mythos* of the digital humanities. But, as is evident on a larger social scale, this supposed openness, transparency, and access turns out to be merely a deeper penetration of capitalist markets into the social body, a more advanced stage of privatisation, where even the social relations between individuals are now systematically exploited through data-intensive computing.[21] This is the age of techno-corporations like Meta, X, and Google, whose true function is not to build a democracy of digital communication but, rather, to create networks and platforms of social *disintegration* that transform individuals into data-providers and consumers in order to feed their business models.[22]

A central aspect of techno-utopian ideology is data fetishism, which is the belief that the attainment of knowledge about the world requires everything to be transformed into data and information.[23] Data, the argument goes, is fully transparent and non-ideological; this is expressed through the idea that "with enough data, the numbers speak for themselves."[24] Consequently, there is no longer any need for theory, critique, narrative, or even interpretation. If the numbers speak for themselves, then all we need are tools and methods to capture and compute them. Here lies the seductive illusion that underwrites the "tools and archives" approach to the digital humanities. Such an approach transforms scholarship into little more than a technical project of building digital tools, datasets, and archives. From this perspective, critical and reflexive thinking have little to offer, as they can only obstruct the smooth accumulation of data. There is, then, a tendency within the digital humanities, characteristic of the larger digital domain itself, to eliminate critical thought and produce a non-thinking, non-reflexive digital machine. After all, "thinking," writes philosopher Byung-Chul Han, "is not a category of the digital."[25] Instead, he argues, the digital domain functions largely through automatic operations, where there is no need for active decision-making and no space for negativity (the critique and negation of capitalism).[26] It is an endless realm of positivity, of noiseless data, and of calculations. A key task for critical scholars within the digital humanities, therefore, is to jam the gears of data accumulation and move beyond this "tools and archives" approach by openly embracing the difficult and slow-moving work of critical humanistic and reflexive thought.

However, another danger appears alongside the affirmation of critical humanistic and reflexive thought: that of performative, depoliticised critique. This occurs when the discourse of critique is professionalised in the university and untethered from any concrete form of collective power. Critique, then, functions as a mere efflux of the professional academic's social isolation and their

subordination to their institutional environment.[27] Here, the function of critique is identical to the function of avoiding critique in the name of building tools and archives: to disavow one's complicity and entanglement within existing power relations.

How does one proceed, then, in light of these critiques, problems, and dangers? Are there opportunities within the digital humanities for projects that challenge neoliberal forces and structures? Can we foster a dialogic environment that enables critical humanistic and reflexive interactions within the virtual realm and, if so, what would that look like? These questions offer us a point of entry to contemplate the role of our own projects in relation to structures of power and ideology, while also engaging more critically with the field of digital humanities moving forward. What follows, therefore, is our attempt to grapple with these issues through the lens of the Digital Mary Project, envisioning ways in which we might push back against the prevailing forces of the neoliberal university, while simultaneously charting a path forward for other projects anchored in ancient Mediterranean world to do the same. To do so, however, we must first introduce the Digital Mary Project and confront its shortcomings that led us to embark on this reflective exercise.

Introducing the Digital Mary Project

The Digital Mary Project began in 2018 as a collaborative research partnership between Sabrina C. Higgins at Simon Fraser University (Department of Global Humanities), Niki Tsironis at the National Hellenic Research Foundation in Athens, and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University. The initial aim of the collaboration was to build a comprehensive, open-access database with sophisticated search functions that would bring together all the artistic productions, artefacts, and built landscapes related to the early cult of the Virgin Mary into a single digital platform. The ambitious nature of such an undertaking, however, led us to conceive of the project as a "living archive," which is consistently updated with new entries by a team of undergraduate and graduate research assistants at Simon Fraser University, as well as a small number of graduate students associated with the National Hellenic Research Foundation, all of whom work alongside the project co-founders.[28] At present, the archival component of the Digital Mary Project holds over 280 entries, which range from monumental wall paintings, portable icons and ivories, ecclesiastical sites, architectural features, fine personal adornments including jewellery and textiles, and everyday objects like bronze *enkolpions* (medallion with an icon), lead seals, and incised ceramics. Each entry contains all the relevant object metadata, as well as descriptions, images, and relevant bibliography.[29] The archive currently includes objects from Late Roman, Byzantine, Syriac, Coptic, Nubian, Ayyubid, Venetian, Georgian and Armenian contexts, with plans to broaden the geographic and temporal scope of the database beyond its current focus on the Late Antique and Early

Medieval Mediterranean Basin, North Africa, and West Asia – that is, the regions where the cult of Mary first emerged.

The original concept for the project arose from a pressing need within the field of Marian studies for a central repository of art and material culture related to the cult of the Virgin Mary, especially given that researchers are often met with the tedious task of sifting through vast amounts of physical and digital archival materials – including excavation reports dating back as early as the 1800s, travellers' accounts, and undigitised museum catalogues – for mentions of relevant religious objects. Not only is this a time-consuming process, but such work can often bear a substantial financial burden, particularly for those without institutional support or affiliations with academic libraries, since they often encounter paywalls when attempting to access relevant articles or archival materials. These institutional barriers can be even more challenging for the general public, who may be interested in Marian religious iconography, material culture, and built landscapes but struggle to know where to look, since these objects are often hidden within small or undigitised publications not widely recognised outside specialised circles. Thus, the initial iteration of the Digital Mary Project sought to consolidate, for the first time, the vast material and visual culture of the cult of the Virgin Mary into one easily searchable, open-access, digital archive that would be accessible to both scholars and the public alike.

Thinking Beyond the "Tool and Archives" Approach

In highlighting the design of the earliest iteration of the Digital Mary Project and its initial conception as strictly an open-source database, we can now reflect on the fundamental issues inherent within the project and suggest ways to move it beyond a simple "tools and archives" space. To do so, we must first acknowledge our own complicity in the neoliberal university system that requires us to continually innovate, compete, and produce, often at the cost of critical humanistic inquiry. As discussed above, the field of digital humanities is especially adept at skirting around these issues, presenting itself as a collaborative venture that seamlessly integrates digital technologies and traditional humanities disciplines, while framing databases and other digital archival repositories as primary humanistic tools for connecting historical and cultural data to the world.[30] Such a framework is appealing to scholars – including ourselves – who are looking to delve into the digital humanities, as it offers the possibility of creating a concrete product that will benefit those working in a particular area of expertise, without necessarily prioritising any discussion of the theoretical potential of such computational tools.[31]

Indeed, online databases play a critical role in organising, curating, storing and facilitating large amounts of information, and might serve as wellsprings from which humanistic insights can emerge – but they are not themselves humanistic spaces.[32] This is especially evident when we interrogate the organising structure

of a database, which relies on quantitative metadata that is presented to the user as factual and unchanging; a structural design that is fundamentally at odds with critical and humanistic inquiry. Databases are also touted for their ability to offer high-level search functions and the ability to manipulate information in a multitude of ways,[33] but the emphasis on functionality and the accessibility of data avoids any confrontation with a real need to theorise the disruptive possibilities of the archival space; a space that, when activated, has the potential to imbue collected histories with liberatory potential and engage with decolonising methodologies.[34] The Digital Mary Project was born out of this common yet naive approach, and was positioned as a strictly utilitarian and data-driven resource. Five years after its initial design, however, we are now reckoning with the inherent issues and complexities that stem from the construction of a database that lacked critical reflexivity, while also acknowledging the inherent biases and/or values built into the project by the initial design team.[35]

The realisation of our own project's shortcomings arose, in part, from an earlier version of this chapter, delivered as a lightning round talk at the *Presenting the Past* colloquium. Here, we sought to posit the Digital Mary Project as a "democratising" space, contending that online databases afford everyone increased accessibility to historical and cultural material. In this sense, we argued that they have the potential to allow individuals beyond the ivory tower to participate in research and the dissemination of knowledge, which can ultimately create a more diverse and inclusive understanding of history.[36] It became readily apparent in the immediate aftermath of the colloquium, however, that we could not posit the Digital Mary Project as a democratising enterprise, especially as we engaged with the work of other participants whose projects were firmly embedded in decolonial practices, critical theory, and community-engaged practice.[37] Our project offered a novel way to access information related to the Virgin Mary, but it was designed to function as a closed database, in which direct participation in the knowledge building process was limited to a select number of research assistants affiliated with the project. In pausing to reflect, we realised that the notion of "democratisation" cannot simply extend to concepts of accessibility and broader participation with the historical record, it must also radically confront the power structures embedded within our projects and throughout society, offer sustained and non-exploitative pathways to community participation, and engage in critical reflections on the materials within our digital spaces.[38]

In recognising the issues inherent within the conceptual design of our project after the initial construction of the website, we saw but one path forward: we needed to delay the launch of the Digital Mary Project and re-envision it, challenging its function as a strictly archival tool. To do so, we immersed ourselves in the scholarship of critical digital humanists, especially those whose work challenges the pervasive neoliberal and neocolonial structural conditions that are embedded within the "tools and archive" approach.[39] Next, we conducted an internal audit to critique the shortcomings our of project, identifying the ways in which

we might engage in critical humanistic thought and create more equitable involvement in the knowledge production process. From this self-reflexive exercise, we have developed several proposed changes to the Digital Mary Project, which we hope will engender a dialogue among the various community members and groups impacted by the project.[40] The remainder of this chapter, therefore, takes the reader with us as we embark on a reflective journey that interrogates our initial conceptual choices and the resulting paradigm shift in which we reimagine archival spaces through the lens of critical theory and interrogate the potential of digital humanities projects to participate in exercises that explore the production of counter-practices against neoliberal power.

Re-Envisioning the Digital Mary Project

While it is never easy nor comfortable reflecting on the shortcomings of your own work, it is a necessary step in confronting the structural inequities, biases, and limitations of our projects before they are released into the digital realm. In doing so, this exercise led us to address our own initial lack of theoretical positioning within the digital humanities, while also highlighting our own complicity in upholding the pervasive notions of techno-utopianism, criticised by contemporary theorists, through the construction of an entirely utilitarian tool.[41] Admittedly, the benefit of working within the digital humanities is the impermanence of the virtual spaces we create and the ability to redesign our projects in response to critiques, both internal and external. As such, we take this opportunity to envision a new Digital Mary Project which prioritises critical reflexivity and avoids the essentialism inherent in the current database structure. Is there a way to achieve this, however, while simultaneously maintaining the many useful elements of the searchable archival space that we so painstakingly built over the last five years? Or is it time to start anew and rebuild or project from the ground up?

These questions cannot be answered solely by the authors of this paper. If we are to reimagine the Digital Mary Project, we must involve other Marian scholars and digital humanities practitioners in field of ancient Mediterranean studies, broadly construed, who are working on database-related projects. Only by doing so can we create a meaningful discourse within our community that centres the needs of the individuals who plan to use this platform, while also reflecting on the ways in which the project might contribute more directly to humanistic inquiry within our digital Mariological space. We can, however, suggest some paths forward for the project, which we hope might offer a point of departure for the necessary consultations to bridge the existing epistemological differences that loom over the Digital Mary Project, and others like it. To do so, it is imperative that we look beyond the computational and structural models inherent within the current database and find ways to reinfuse indeterminacy and critical reflexivity back into our project, notably through the introduction of interpretative mechanisms that are guided by critical humanistic and narrative thinking.[42]

From a design perspective, our internal critique yielded at least four major changes that we envision making to the current Digital Mary Project to address the lack of critical humanistic and narrative thought in the original prototype. First, the addition of an interpretive field to each object entry, which allows for reflexive narratives concerning the trajectories of the artefact's use, production, collection history, and iconographic identification.[43] The addition of this field confronts the static archive approach embedded within the current database structure, in which only the object metadata is presented to the user. We also identified the closed nature of the Digital Mary Project as a reproduction of the neoliberal and neocolonial power structures, given that the current knowledge building process is limited to a small number of scholars and research assistants. To address this, we propose the inclusion of a community-based conversation page on the website, where discussions, objects for analysis, and critical commentary can be initiated by the members of the project or, more importantly, the public at-large, to foster a more inclusive and engaged community.[44] In addition to a forum that fosters critical conversations among its users, we have recently embedded a "challenge" function to each individual entry, which will allow our users to contest the content of all entries within the database.[45] Submitted remarks will populate the interpretation section of a given object's catalogue page and facilitate transparent critique of the data we have presented in the database. Next, we also foresee the addition of a "Features" page, which will host blog posts by scholars who are using critical theory to engage with Marian themes. Finally, we take seriously the recent critiques in the field of digital humanities, which highlight the orientation of our projects to the Global North and the need to develop antidiscriminatory approaches to digital scholarship. Such approaches are critical as we engage in the co-creation of global knowledge with the descendent communities whose material culture we are extracting for our project.[46] In the case of the Digital Mary Project, we are committed to including translations of each entry to the modern language used by their contemporary source communities, as well as to recruiting specialists from outside the Global North to contribute entries for the database.[47] Beyond the structural reorganisation of the digital platform, however, there are larger systemic issues with the current operational hierarchy that need to be addressed, especially if we intend to produce a digital humanities project that embraces a digital counter-practice in the hopes of building a community of difference.

The Digital Mary Project: Creating a Digital Counter-Practice

While most digital humanities projects are posited as collaborative initiatives that draw on the expertise of scholars, computer scientists, and expert amateurs, they remain embedded within the power structures of the neoliberal university system – a system which, by and large, puts academics at the forefront of digital humanities initiatives (whether through project ownership claims or publication rights), whereby the contributions of other project members, including undergraduate

students, graduate students, and expert non-academics, are undervalued.[48] In order to challenge these power structures, then, it is necessary to dismantle traditional hierarchies of access and build a digital counter-practice that fosters broader participation and deliberately seeks out the expertise of individuals traditionally excluded from published scholarship.[49] At the same time, the broadening of participation in the area of knowledge production must be accompanied by the recognition of and compensation for the labour provided by contributing members. It is this notion of a digital counter-practice that lies at the heart of the reimagined Digital Mary Project; we envision a space that attempts to negotiate its position both within and against the hierarchical structure of the academy through the establishment of a communal network that prioritises and values traditionally underrepresented and marginalised voices in the field of Marian Studies – specifically, those of our students, contingent faculty, minoritised scholars, and expert amateurs. In doing so, we hope to recognise and confront existing power structures, create opportunities for dialogue that challenge the dominant narratives permeating the closed academic circles we typically inhabit, and respond to the critique that the field of Digital humanities is "a naively positivist refuge from cultural studies, critical race theory, postcolonial theory, and other scholarly methods designed to surface the concerns of marginalised communities."[50] The creation of digital counter-practice, therefore, provides a "permanent point of intersection between top-down initiatives and bottom-up interventions,"[51] wherein knowledge is constructed by a community engaged in dialogic interactions.[52]

From a practical perspective, the construction of a digital counter-practice requires a complete upheaval of the hierarchical and design structures embedded within the first iteration of the Digital Mary Project. To begin, we must abandon the specific regional and diachronic interests of the project – that is, the Late Antique and Byzantine Mediterranean, North African, and West Asian worlds – which represent the research interests of the project co-founders but exclude perspectives and materials that fall outside our narrow geographic and chronological fields of knowledge.[53] While setting aside our own research interests in the broader reconfiguration of the project is essential in the creation of a digital counter-practice, there must also be a fundamental shift in its organisational structure: a relinquishing of control by the project founders and the construction of new modes of engagement that represent the interests of the digital space we hope to build. The irony of this reflective position, however, is not lost on us, as we recognise the power dynamics at play in the reconstruction of the Digital Mary Project from within and the ways in which our existing networks will inform – at least initially – the makeup of this new space. It is imperative, therefore, to look beyond our scholarly communities and deliberately seek out and prioritise scholars, students, and expert amateurs whose interests in the Virgin Mary challenge the current geographic and temporal interests of the project and centre these voices from the outset.

This kind of engagement, however, cannot simply replicate the current neoliberal discourse of accessibility, agency, and community building, which dominates

the digital humanities, nor can it exploit the labour of the contingent faculty and students that we bring onboard.[54] Instead, we need to look towards a radical overhaul of the hierarchical and exploitative systems that are so commonly entrenched in digital humanities projects. As a counter-practice, then, we must foster a community within the digital sphere that prioritises a dialectic approach to project management in which all interested parties – as an engaged partnership of equals – collectively guide the direction of the project and inform the content that we release. In practice, this could conceivably consist of monthly virtual meetings, shared planning documents, and the ability of all participants to access and modify the project's website themselves.[55] The construction of such a community, however, requires further consideration and cannot be achieved without careful, conscientious, and intentional planning and decision making. It is also important to tap into the existing ecosystem of digital humanities practitioners working within critical religious studies and ancient Mediterranean studies to build a community of like-minded scholars.[56]

In addition to dismantling the power structure embedded in the initial iteration of the Digital Mary Project, we must also recognise the precarity that pervades academia and offer compensation to researchers who participate in this venture alongside us. We have made it a priority to reject the current capitalist turn in the digital humanities that exploits the free labour of students and non-tenured faculty through the lens of CV-enhancing opportunities that develop new skills or build digital literacy.[57] Compensation, therefore, needs to be built into the overall funding models of our projects, ensuring that the labour of our precariously employed contributors does not go unrecognised. In this regard, we look especially to projects like The Database of Religious History and Peopling the Past, who are leaders in the digital humanities and ancient Mediterranean studies for their compensation models for authors.[58]

While our research assistants have received compensation for their labour since the inception of the project – either employed through Simon Fraser University's Work Study programme or funded through various grants acquired by the project's co-founders – our funding model has, thus far, limited any paid involvement to students affiliated with the two founding institutions. To build out our digital counter-practice to a wider network, we will need to explore different forms of funding to compensate any individual wishing to contribute. Until such funding is secured, however, one of the co-founders has committed to using her own research funds to support a more equitable model for the project. The question remains, however, where does such funding come from? Can we avoid the techno-capitalism that funds so many of the digital humanities projects that exist today? And, if our projects are otherwise tied to the university through its various funding mechanisms and integrated digital humanities labs, are there opportunities to challenge these spaces when we are dependent upon them for the very existence of our projects? How, then, do we create a digital counter-space and negotiate our position within these systems? There are no immediate answers to these

questions, as digital humanities projects, by design, require funding to get off the ground, but it is essential that we remain vigilant in our efforts to create critical, ethical, and equitable counter-practices within these inherently neoliberal spaces.

Conclusion

Through our reflections on the issues presented above, we are confronted with the real possibility that the Digital Mary Project will not succeed in creating a digital counter-space that confronts the problems inherent within the neoliberal university. Within our limited domain, we plan to implement a more equitable compensation model, privilege the analysis and critique of power structures, and support underrepresented and marginalised voices in a bid to restructure the field itself. We believe that projects – like the Database of Religious History and Peopling the Past – that carry out these important and necessary tasks will make a difference. But they are still university-based projects and, as such, they are not incompatible with neoliberal imperatives. A more equitable compensation model in the context of project work still relies on a form of contingent wage labour, and the neoliberal university has proven remarkably adept at professionalising and neutralising critique and opposition to itself. Finally, the imperative of supporting underrepresented and marginalised voices in the field can be recoded or even usurped as a drive to expand the reach of capital itself, to bring more bodies into its ethic of the enterprise. So, we are left in a kind of condition of indeterminacy, neither condemned to reproduce existing power relations nor free to transcend them but, rather, surrounded by ever-present traps and dangers. A digital counter-space, then, must necessarily operate as an ongoing practice that requires a kind of vigilance in its confrontation with the neoliberal forces and imperatives present within the digital humanities (and also within ourselves), and a simultaneous recognition that our projects risk reinforcing the systems that we seek to overcome.

Notes

1 The authors would like to thank Chelsea Gardner, Nadhira Hill, and the anonymous reviewer for their comments on earlier drafts of this chapter. We are also indebted to all our research collaborators (past and present), who have contributed to the Digital Mary Project, especially Niki Tsironis, Véronique Magnes, Theofili Kampianaki, Matthea Wiebe, Aleksander Jovanovic, and the undergraduate research assistants employed through SFU's Work Study Programme who contributed countless entries to the database, especially Megan Light, Paige Tuttosi, Jenna Kotolyluk, and Giulia Crovini. A special note of gratitude is owed to Aurora E. Camaño (co-author of this chapter) who has served as the lead research associate on this project since its inception in 2018. We are also indebted to the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University for their tireless support in building and re-imagining this project alongside us, as well as the SFU Open Access Fund for providing the funding that enabled this chapter to be published as Gold Open Access.

2 For a critical discussion of funding structures within the digital humanities, see Allington et al. 2016, May 1.

3 Posner 2016, 54.
4 In 2018, Punctum Books published a volume of collected essays which speak to the work being done by critical and radical scholars within the digital humanities. See Kim and Stommel 2018. See also the work of Boyd and Ruberg 2022, 63–73 and Gairola 2022, 49–61.
5 The term "undercommons" is borrowed from Moten and Harney 2013, 25–43.
6 For a discussion of the concept of communities of difference, see Davidson 2018, xii.
7 Spiro (2012, 28) states that diversity is one of the key values which defines the digital humanities. By diversity, she seems to mean an inclusive or "big-tent" approach to the digital humanities, a kind of expansive participation where members of different races, ethnicities, sexualities, nationalities, abilities, and so on, are welcomed into the field. Our point is that the rhetoric of diversity and inclusion is insufficient to capture the political task of rupturing and reconfiguring the digital humanities.
8 The notion of politics as a "rupturing the sensible" is owed to Rancière's (2011, 27–44) work on politics and aesthetics.
9 Pichichero 2023.
10 This definition is owed in part to Harvey 2007, 2–3.
11 *Interpellation* refers to the process whereby capitalist ideology calls out to individuals, transforming them into subjects (i.e., subordinated individuals) who nonetheless conceive of themselves as *free* (italics for emphasis). The individual is thus an active participant in their own subordination to capital, identifying with its imperatives of commodification, privatisation, innovation, and so on. See Althusser 2014.
12 Hall 2016, xi.
13 The logic of the market is the logic of commodification. Its extension is the process whereby the commodity form is advanced into all spheres of life; where everything and everyone is transformed into a product which is exchangeable for money (the universal equivalent) on a market. Extreme examples of this process involve the commodification of drinking water, clean air, and even the capacity to speak and relate with one another (i.e., Meta/Facebook).
14 Han 2017b, 1.
15 Han 2017b.
16 Risam 2022, 46.
17 It is particularly problematic when those behind such projects claim to be advancing progressive values such as digital democracy, the digital commons, open access, and so on. It is a kind of sorcery to suggest that the ruthless privatisation of the material conditions of the production of knowledge somehow result in progressive democratic or communal ends.
18 For Fisher (2009, 11), capitalist realism is the deflationary and cynical perspective that claims to *see* and *accept* the world as it really is, a Hobbesian war of all against all or scenario of perpetual exploitation (italics for emphasis).
19 Kirschenbaum 2012, 415–28.
20 Presner 2009, June 22. See also Spiro 2012, 16–35.
21 Stiegler 2019, 73.
22 Stiegler 2019.
23 Han 2017b, 57.
24 Anderson 2008, June 23.
25 Han 2017a, 52.
26 Han 2017a, 22.
27 Moten and Harvey 2013, 39.
28 These students are employed through various research grants or the Work Study programme at Simon Fraser University.
29 The current fields in each database entry are: Name, Description, Category, Inscription, Inscription Type, Culture, Date, Provenance, Findspot, Material, Technique, Dimensions, Location, Subject, and References.

30 Ramsay 2004.
31 Hall 2012, 128–29.
32 Katz 2005, 108–9.
33 Katz 2005, 109.
34 Caswell 2021, 7–12.
35 For an additional discussion of potential biases in project design, see Hayles 2012, 39.
36 This initial line of reasoning drew heavily on the works of Hunter 2015, 407–24; Spiro 2012, 16–35; and Presner 2009.
37 We are especially indebted to the insights presented by Heba abd el-Gawad and Annissa Malvoisin at the colloquium, whose work appears in the current volume.
38 Hassan 2008, 119–20; Gerber 2022; Ermus 2023, 22–23; Wrisley 2023.
39 See especially the works of Noble 2019; Ono 2013; Risam 2016 and 2018; Pichichero 2023; as well as the contributions in O'Sullivan 2022.
40 As the proposed overhaul of the Digital Mary Project is still in its infancy, consultations with the various communities we envision using this resource had not yet taken place at the time of publication. However, we plan to take the results of our internal audit to begin a dialogue with the various communities who might use this resource and gauge how the project can serve their needs.
41 For critiques of techno-utopianism and the resulting calls to theorise the digital humanities, see Risam 2018 and Berry 2022, 125–36.
42 Fan 2018, 4.
43 See the chapter by Ashton Rodgers in this volume for a discussion of the necessity of critical provenance narratives in our discussions of belongings.
44 We will direct traffic to these questions through our various social media channels in a bid to increase engagement on the website.
45 The addition of this function is inspired by a similar mechanism embedded into the entries of the Database of Religious History, whose work is featured in this volume (Canlas et al.).
46 Pawlicka-Deger 2022; Wrisley 2023. See also the discussion in Canlas et al., this volume pp. 281–85.
47 The first phase of our translation efforts will focus on Greek and Turkish, given the current volume of materials in the database from Greece and Turkey. Funding is currently being sought to support Arabic translations, as its inclusion requires a complete redesign of the website on the back end, given its current inability to support right-to-left script languages.
48 It is not our intention to call out specific university-based projects here, but rather to highlight the pervasive trend of using volunteer labour in these initiatives, especially graduate and undergraduate students, who's work populates digital humanities projects, but who's effort remains uncompensated or unrecognised in the scholarship resulting from these projects. The latter of which this volume seeks to rectify.
49 Murdock and Golding 2004, 258. See also, Opel and Simeone 2019.
50 Posner 2018, 332.
51 Murdock 2001, 458.
52 Logino 1994, 142–43.
53 On the importance of recognising our collection biases and positionality as digital humanists, see Calahan 2019, 5.
54 Hunter 2015, 416–17; Davidson 2008, 711.
55 This kind of access will maintain the existing built-in peer-review system through which all new additions to the website are subjected.
56 See for example, Papyri.Info (https://papyri.info/), a digital humanities project that collects and curates papyrological documents, while simultaneously allowing its entire community of papyrologists to have editorial control over the data on the website.

57 The pervasive trend of framing labour as "volunteer work" is especially prolific among graduate students, who are accustomed to accepting these conditions as career-building opportunities. See, for example, Davies 2016, September 27.
58 The work of both The Database of Religious History and Peopling the Past are featured in the present volume: Canlas et al. and Johnston et al., respectively.

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15

PUBLIC HUMANITIES AND THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN

A Conversation with Liv Albert of the *Let's Talk about Myths, Baby!* Podcast, Flora Kirk of *Flaroh Illustration*, and Megan Lewis of *Digital Hammurabi*

Melissa Funke, Liv Albert, Flora Kirk, and Megan Lewis

Introduction (Melissa Funke)

The chapters in this volume have thus far explored the practice of the public humanities – as it relates to the study and teaching of topics connected to the ancient Mediterranean – in institutional contexts, specifically universities and museums with all of their attendant structures and hierarchies. As outlined in the previous chapter, public humanities work situated within these types of institutions, even when aiming to represent marginalised voices and to rethink the current structure of ancient Mediterranean studies, cannot entirely escape many of the forces like colonialism and capitalism that have shaped such institutions and their continued operations.[1] Seeking to represent voices from beyond the confines of traditional academic venues and through a medium that offers more flexibility than a typical academic chapter, the editors of this volume have chosen to present the following conversation with three independent public scholars: Liv Albert, Flora Kirk, and Megan Lewis. These three experts are self-employed and have built their own platforms for engaging with broad audiences interested in the ancient past. Including their perspectives and expertise in this volume allows us to consider how scholars within the academy can learn from our colleagues outside the academy; in particular, their insights shed light on how we might reach non-specialist audiences and how we can support each other's public-facing work.

As part of the March 2023 colloquium "Presenting the Past: Responsible Engagement and Mediterranean History" (held in Vancouver, British Columbia and organised by the team behind Peopling the Past[2]), Liv, Flora, and Megan came together for an in-depth conversation that focused on the practical aspects of public scholarship, as practiced outside the academy. Each participant was invited to contribute to this discussion on account of their significant contributions to public

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outreach on topics related to the ancient Mediterranean world: Liv Albert is the creator and host of the Greek mythology podcast *Let's Talk About Myths, Baby!* (https://www.mythsbaby.com/), which averages 10,000,000 downloads per year, and author of the popular books *Greek Mythology: The Gods, Goddesses, and Heroes Handbook* and *Nectar of the Gods* (a book of Greek myth-themed cocktails); Flora Kirk is a freelance illustrator based in the United Kingdom, whose visual depictions of the ancient Mediterranean have appeared in classrooms and museums and reach an audience of nearly 19,000 people on Instagram (flarohillustration.com); Megan Lewis runs the Digital Hammurabi YouTube channel, with over 55,000 subscribers, and is the host of three podcasts (*The Digital Hammurabi Podcast*, *Misquoting Jesus with Bart Ehrman*, and *The Reading Party Podcast* with Alexandra Henning as part of *The Ozymandias Project*; https://www.digitalhammurabi.com/).[3]

Our goal in facilitating and publishing this conversation is to explore the role(s) of public scholars who work outside the academy, while encouraging inclusive contemplation on what forms the public humanities can take. With this focus in mind, the discussion presented below centres around three major poles: the medium of engagement with the public, the challenges of reaching a broad audience outside of the academy, and the ways in which academics and public humanists can best collaborate in order to reach the broadest public audience. The following interview is a collection of reflections based on the conversation from the colloquium in which Liv, Flora, and Megan address the circumstances that brought them to their work, the task of reaching a broad audience, and the potential for collaboration with academics interested in public humanities; their comments have been lightly edited in the interest of clarity and continuity.

Melissa Funke (*Peopling the Past*): Please describe your project. How did you get started with it? How did you choose the platform(s) that you use?

Liv Albert (*Let's Talk About Myths, Baby!*): *Let's Talk About Myths, Baby!* was created in 2017 as a fun and silly hobby, a podcast where I casually retold stories from Greek myth. I wanted to focus on how women were treated in the stories, along with the more comedic aspects that I felt were often overlooked in favour of the "Serious, Intellectual, Glorious Ancient Greek Men" narrative that often permeates these discussions. At the beginning, I just wanted to have some fun, do something with my free time, and maybe entertain a handful of people along the way. I'd graduated with a degree in English Literature and Classics in 2012 from Concordia University, but I never intended to use the Classics aspects of my education. After a career hiccup, I was a little lost and decided to return to my love of Classics, of ancient Greece, and, most especially, its mythology, through the creation of a podcast. I had the basic background to create the content, but it was very surface level – and that showed in the early years of the podcast.

Six years later, however, I'm a (mostly) self-taught professional podcaster and author of two Greek mythology-related books. Over the years, my research methods have changed drastically and I've developed an obsession with primary sources, accuracy – in whatever way that exists in Greek myth – and in discussing the nuances that must necessarily be taken into consideration when learning about and understanding the ancient world. My knowledge has grown immensely over this time, along with my ability to learn more. I've also always ensured that I speak about important issues by adopting a feminist lens for the podcast, discussing both how women were treated in the ancient world, and how that treatment is viewed now. Finally, I prioritise and highlight the stories of LGBTQIA+ characters in Greek myth and never shy away from the more problematic aspects embedded within the field of Classics, including the myth of "Western Civilization." In doing so, I hope that my listeners recognise the plurality of bodies that existed within the melting pot that was the ancient Mediterranean.

While the podcast still focuses on these important issues, it now also offers a deep dive into the ancient sources, both the stories themselves and the context surrounding the survival and transmission of these sources. About three years ago, I also started slowly integrating readings of translations of ancient sources (from the public domain), like Homer, Apollonios Rhodios, and Ovid, into the podcast. Next, I began including conversations with authors and scholars about their books, work, expertise, basically anything and everything related to the ancient Mediterranean. One of the biggest and most rewarding surprises of the latter addition to the podcast was how much my audience wanted to hear experts talk about the ancient world. Even when the topic is something niche and seemingly trivial, tens of thousands of listeners around the world are happy to dive in and listen along. When I invite academics to join me on the podcast, they get to speak to a major audience: my podcast has an enormous reach, so not only are people around the globe – both those studying the ancient world and anyone with just a passing interest or passion – learning about the stories of ancient Greek myth, but they're also engaging with important issues that go beyond ancient Greece and its myths that were previously shared with them.

Flora Kirk (Flaroh Illustrations): I create digital illustrations of the ancient Mediterranean world, specialising in vibrant depictions of mythology and everyday life, which I share on Instagram, Twitter, BlueSky, Facebook, Tiktok, and Patreon, as well as my website, flarohillustration.com. I have a BA in Ancient Studies from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and an MA in Museum Studies from Durham University. I also spent a year in Transylvania researching Roman coins with the Fulbright Programme, so my academic background inspires me to create accurate and aesthetic depictions of the ancient world. I like to base my artwork on archaeological finds, in order to keep everything as accurate as possible. However, for subjects like mythology, I worry less about adhering to a specific chronological period or era, but instead make sure that my subjects are

identifiably Roman or Greek. In doing so, people without a strong background in ancient history or mythology can still recognise the individual (e.g., Achilles with a Corinthian helmet in my *Iliad* piece; Figure 15.1), and read the captions to learn more about the historical accuracy of certain elements [in the images].

FIGURE 15.1 Mock up of a book cover for Homer's *Iliad*, digital art by Flora Kirk.

Megan Lewis (*Digital Hammurabi*): On 29 April 2018, I sat in the living room and watched on my laptop as my husband, Dr. Joshua Bowen, participated in his first ever live YouTube interview. About twenty minutes into the interview, someone in the live chat asked if we had our own YouTube channel and, by the end of it, I'd created a channel and drafted a list of video ideas. Neither of us were able to pursue careers in academia, and this YouTube thing seemed like a good way to share the knowledge we'd been lucky enough to gain during our graduate education.

Since then, Digital Hammurabi has grown from a side project into my primary occupation. I turn some of the videos I produce for the YouTube channel into podcast episodes, and I offer the channel as a live-streaming venue for academic conferences and workshops, including the *Save Ancient Studies Alliance*'s yearly open-access conference. The YouTube channel has grown far beyond what I originally envisioned, with over 600 videos to date, and 42,700 subscribers. Our videos are primarily interviews with researchers, and [our platform] give(s) them the opportunity to explain their corner of the ancient world to our audience of interested non-specialists. I've been blown away by the sustained growth of the channel, which I believe reflects a thirst for research-based information about the ancient world that people can rely on, but that is not trapped either behind a paywall or impenetrable academic jargon.

Under the Digital Hammurabi umbrella, I also run the Digital Hammurabi Press, an academically rigorous self-publishing operation. "Academically rigorous" and "self-publishing" are not two phrases that are typically paired, but we work hard to make sure that everything we put out reflects a [general] consensus in scholarship and goes through some form of peer review, whenever possible.

Finally, a quick note on why we chose to go this route. In large part, it was due to a need for stability. We have a young family and moving them across the country – or across the world – so Josh and I could pursue academic careers was not something either of us wanted to do. It's not just geographical stability; working in this manner – that is, choosing to not pursue traditional academia – has allowed me and our family the kind of financial stability that would be hard to achieve without being granted tenure.

Melissa Funke: How does the medium of engagement with the public (podcast, video, or digital artwork) shape the content that is presented?

Liv Albert: I started the show on a whim, with no intention of making a career out of it and no idea that it would reach anyone beyond a handful of random strangers. As a result, I did not originally put much thought into how I did things. Instead, (the podcast) grew and adapted at the same time as my listeners and I did, shifting organically into what it is today – that is, a highly respected podcast among scholars of Greek mythology.

The medium of podcasting is somewhat unique amongst other content creation: you create something, put your heart and soul into it, along with hours of thought and dedication, and then you just upload it to whatever random website you have selected and trust that it's going to feed out into peoples' podcast players, and that they're going to listen and enjoy it. As a result, you must rely on the listeners themselves to reach out to you if you want an idea of what they're thinking, what they like, or don't like, and so on. Of course, some of that can be gleaned from the statistics of listenership, but that only gives the numbers themselves. It was necessary, then, to create a social media presence across various platforms, where I would post about the ancient world, my episodes, and whatever else came to mind to attract an audience to the podcast. I try to be engaging but, personally, I'm not one for casual social media chit-chat with strangers, so it's often a struggle. It's necessary, though, for both growth and the continuation of the podcast, that I have a place where listeners can reach me and can interact with me and my content more directly than a podcast allows.

Flora Kirk: Because it is graphic and colourful, I mainly share my work on social media, as this platform will constantly advertise itself to new audiences. I also have a website of my portfolio highlights (as a reference point for those interested in specific pieces) and I run a Patreon site that requires subscription access. All three venues involve posting a picture of my illustration and writing an informative caption explaining the depicted scene, which includes any historical research I conducted during the concept process that I would like to highlight. While Patreon is behind a paywall, almost all of the content gets released to the public after a short time (usually one month).

Megan Lewis: We have videos on YouTube and a website with other resources. YouTube has a lot of flexibility in terms of the content form, but what has worked best for us is (primarily) an interview-style video. I can (and do!) achieve the same thing via podcasting, but interviewing live on YouTube lets us build up a relationship with our audience and gives them the opportunity to ask questions of our guests themselves. Lay people rarely are able to access experts directly, and I think that providing this access helps to create trust in academics and foster an interest in the ancient world that a documentary-style video may not be able to.

I had relatively little technical experience going into this, so a lot has been learned on the fly. The YouTube creator community is incredibly open and helpful, and I've been lucky to have received help with the more technical side of things from various friends. My broad training in ancient studies (Assyriology primarily, but also Egyptology, Archaeology, and Greek and Roman history and literature), moreover, provides the essential background knowledge to engage with each of the interview topics we feature, even if the subject is outside my area of expertise.

Melissa Funke: Who is your primary audience? Has it changed over time? What labour is required to make your project easily accessible to a broad audience?

Liv Albert: My primary audience has always consisted of people who are interested in learning about ancient Greek myth. It's expanded a bit, with the help of guests who cover more historical and practical aspects of the ancient Mediterranean, but I've just let that happen naturally, rather than shifting how I handle promotion of the show or my audience. I think often about how I probably could (and maybe should?) be more deliberate about how I think about the show and its appeal to a wider audience, but I always fall back on doing what I want. I'd like to say that I think very seriously about what my audience wants or what will grow my listenership, but it's never something that's come naturally. I listen to feedback, certainly: my listeners love hearing me retell Greek tragedies in detail, and they always want to hear about minor gods whose names are popular but whose stories are (unfortunately!) often non-existent, and I adjust accordingly. For instance, because there are so few stories associated with certain personification deities, I like to feature Q&A episodes where I allow people to ask their questions and I give whatever answers I can. There isn't always a story for those gods, but at least I can say what there is to be said and alleviate some of those burning desires for more. For the most part, though, I cover the topics I'm interested in and, as a result, my listeners are also interested in those topics. Because it's just me creating the show (or it was just me; I now employ a wonderful producer Michaela Pangowish), I spend most of my efforts on researching and writing scripts, planning guests and themed months; all the various things that go into the production of the podcast. Podcasts are an interesting medium: there are countless places where people can listen to their podcast of choice, all fed by RSS streams. I've bounced around from one RSS host to another throughout the years, starting with free options and then shifting into more professional options as I grew and found my place. My audience has always managed to find me, so I've just let them. That said, in terms of accessibility, I (really, Michaela) ensure that my show is available on YouTube, where anyone can access episodes with captions, if they need them.

Flora Kirk: My audience is a mix of individuals with both popular and academic interests. When I first began showcasing my work on Twitter (now "X") in 2018, my audience was primarily academic. However, as my following grew and people began sharing my work, I've found (especially on Instagram, where I have been posting ancient world-inspired art since 2016) that the audience has slightly shifted and now the (slight) majority seem to be art lovers with a general interest in mythology and history. The rest continue to be those within the academic community.

I strongly believe that the use of bright colours and easily identifiable imagery in my work makes it accessible to a broad audience. It's also immediately evident that the illustration is set in the ancient Mediterranean, based on clothing and architecture, and then the caption provides additional information regarding who/what is being depicted and why. I also try to stay active on my social media to answer any questions in the comments and provide scholarly references when I can.

Megan Lewis: A large portion of our audience has always consisted of atheists and ex-fundamentalists; initially, this emerged on account of the crossover between Mesopotamian literature and culture and the material presented in the Hebrew Bible; this audience has been sustained by Josh's work to de-weaponise the Hebrew Bible in online spaces. We also get a surprising number of people drawn to our Sumerian language videos, primarily because it's so hard to find reliable, [freely available, not behind a paywall] academic information on the language.

In terms of accessibility and labour, I would love to make our work more accessible. With our print publications, we offer to send PDFs to people who are unable to afford to buy them, and we try and publish everything in ebook formats so that they can be accessed through screen readers. I'm still trying to work out how to do that for our Sumerian grammar books, as I'm not sure how to reproduce images of cuneiform so that they will translate into spoken word. We have also translated our Sumerian grammar content into French, German, and standard Arabic, with requests for a Spanish language version, too. As we're not a traditional press, we largely rely on word of mouth to find translators, which makes the process a little lengthier than I'd prefer.

Making our online content accessible, on the other hand, is more difficult, simply because there is so much of it. YouTube provides automatically generated captions in English, but it's not great at reproducing ancient or non-English words and phrases. This means that someone has to go through and manually add or alter the captions – and that's just for English. We have volunteers who do contribute to this, and Josh and I both work on it when we have the time, but it's incredibly labour intensive to get right.

Melissa Funke: What are the most common challenges in reaching a broad audience outside of the academy (keeping in mind the specific media you use)?

Liv Albert: Fortunately, this issue has never applied to me as I was not a part of the academy to begin with! I never intended to stay in academia after my undergrad, so the podcast has always been aimed at a broad audience. In fact, as the years progressed and I became more serious, more invested in my own

knowledge and ability to share these stories with as much nuance related to the ancient world as possible, I was trying to get into more contact with the academy, rather than [trying to move] beyond it! That said, it's never been a serious issue for me. Through Twitter (now "X") and the community there, I've been able to find a community of experts and academics who have embraced me and my show with open arms, allowing me better access to what academic sources have to offer, since academic work is so often behind a very costly paywall, along with the experts themselves who have all been so keen to share their knowledge with my listeners.

Flora Kirk: Since I want to reach the general public (broadly defined), I would say the hardest audience to reach would be those not on social media or online in general. My sphere of influence is primarily online, so it's difficult to reach those who don't frequent social media. The current reliance on algorithms for social media platforms also determines who sees my work. Some months a piece will get circulated amongst a general audience and I have an influx in followers from all niches of the internet. Other months my accounts are less favoured by the algorithm and my pieces are only seen by my existing audience. At present, the only physical displays I have are in local museums, which are only seen by individuals (i.e., visitors to the museum) who have already made an effort to seek out historical representations. The nature of social media also means that my work could be taken out of context when it's reposted without captions, or if the viewer doesn't take the time to read the accompanying materials.

Megan Lewis: YouTube (and the internet!) is HUGE. Getting your content in front of people who will actually watch it is incredibly difficult! Unfortunately, a lot of the most successful history channels resort to sensationalisation – ancient aliens, ancient mysteries, have we found the arc?! – which I, on principal, try not to do. The other path to success is to do nothing but work … which I also won't do, because work-life balance is one of the reasons I left academia. It can be done, and many channels have managed it – *Religion for Breakfast* springs to mind – but it's a hell of a lot of work without any promise of a liveable wage.

The main difficulties I've had in building the platform and an audience is that I have no training in, or understanding of, marketing and publicity! The audience we've gained has largely been a product of collaborative efforts with other creators; [these include] appearing as a guest on other YouTube channels or podcasts and organising events like "Hitpoints and History," an annual archaeogaming conference that I run in collaboration with *The Ozymandias Project*. Audience reach is a source of frustration, because I know that people are interested in the ancient world and in the work I'm doing, but I have very little knowledge of how to get my videos into their feeds.

Melissa Funke: What responsibilities do you have to your audience as a public humanist?

Liv Albert: Similarly, because I came to the show and my career so unintentionally, I didn't start to think about this until more recently. That isn't to say I didn't feel I had a responsibility to my audience, but it began as more of a desire to share the stories of underrepresented people and gender identities, rather than anything more specifically related to the quality of content. Now, though, I like to ensure that I'm giving my listeners as much accurate information as possible. I'm very conscious of my sources, translations, and what biases might exist within them. I also like to speak about biased sources that I might have consulted in the past without realising, so that my audience knows what they're getting themselves into, if they want to learn more about the ancient world beyond my show. I also host fairly regular Q&A episodes so that I can answer questions that my audience might have about the more intricate aspects of myth and transmission, and the ancient world itself.

Flora Kirk: We have a responsibility to depict the ancient world accurately and to be transparent with deliberate anachronisms. For example, I usually only incorporate anachronisms in myth illustrations to reflect modern trends in what my audience understands as religious worship, but I always make note of it in the write-up.

Many people will take my work as fact, unless stated otherwise. I believe it is important to research each work and to make an effort to stay away from misconceptions. For example, in 2021 I collaborated with Tullie House Museum in Carlisle, England, creating illustrations of Roman people and objects; my art accompanied their collection of Roman artefacts, as a way of bringing them to life. In (creating these illustrations), I took extra care in representing the international population along Hadrian's Wall; in my Roman daily life scenes, moreover, I stay away from the usual classist and white-washed portrayals of patricians and emperors, and instead reflect the everyday life and diversity of the culture. Even along Hadrian's Wall, there were soldiers and civilians from all over the empire, which has often not been reflected in the visual interpretations of this site. I am also trying to incorporate as much polychromy as possible into my city reconstructions, as this concept is still fairly new to a broad audience.

Megan Lewis: [Our primary responsibility is] to share consensus scholarship, responsibly. I'm not conducting new research, and I believe that the onus is on me to make sure that the information I'm sharing is (broadly speaking) academic consensus, rather than fringe theory. Ensuring that we share a diversity of voices is also incredibly important, not only because marginalised scholars conduct excellent research that deserves to be shared, but because it helps to combat nationalist and racist ideas.

Melissa Funke: How can those working within the academy best collaborate with public humanists in order to reach a broad public audience?

Liv Albert: I wish I had some brilliant answer to this question, but until I found myself in a community of people working on things like this (the colloquium), it wasn't something I really thought about. Because I came at this topic as someone who started as a creator and then found themselves fitting in with the label of a public humanist, I've taken a sort of roundabout route. That said, collaboration with other public humanists, scholars, and authors is how I found myself here. Events like this colloquium and creators like myself and the others on this panel are a great step towards reaching that broader audience, but we need buy-in from others in the field. The internet is full of places where people can lend their expertise, in the form of guests on podcast episodes or in social media, YouTube videos, among countless other options. The more common it is for experts in their fields to lend their voices to creators like myself, Flora, and Megan, the more normal those things will become and the easier it will become to reach those broader audiences.

Flora Kirk: One of the best ways to engage a broader audience is to collaborate with someone who has a different medium and/or audience, so that both creators' works can be shared across different platforms. Another one is to work with someone who specialises in a topic and can contribute their expertise to a project. For example, I worked with a Latin educator to create the Hodie Sum poster (https://flarohillustration.com/portfolio/hodiesum). In this project, the educator supplied different Latin adjectives they use in the classroom and I illustrated an expressive character demonstrating each word. The resulting poster is now a visual educational aid that helps learners picture how each word would be used.

Megan Lewis: I think sharing audiences and building networks of like-minded creators/academics is the best way forward. No one loses out if I direct my audience to listen to Liv's podcast, or to buy one of Flora's prints. There's no scarcity of (topics related to) the ancient world to discuss, and no scarcity of people who are passionate about it. Growing a colleague's or collaborator's audience just helps to get more information about the ancient world out into the public sphere.

Concluding Thoughts

Several important themes emerged from this conversation, all of which were largely connected to the obligations that each creator felt as a public humanist: the necessities involved in earning a living from the public humanities; creating accessible work for a variety of audiences; and a responsibility to the material they each present. Since public humanities is the primary means by which each

creator earns their living, understanding how platforms like YouTube and Patreon can generate income is key to sustaining their work. Accessibility of their work, in both the sense of reaching a wide audience without prior knowledge of the material, as well as providing material that would be accessible to a diverse audience with various disability needs, also featured prominently. The consensus among all three speakers was that the first type of accessibility is largely driven by the internet and that in media beyond the internet their ability to reach large numbers is very limited. In terms of the second type of accessibility, access to platforms like YouTube, which have accessibility features like auto-generated captions, is essential.

Throughout the conversation, the responsibility that each creator felt to their audience and to the material they work with was apparent. Although each medium they represent has differing needs with regard to accuracy of the information presented (especially the creative engagements with antiquity), Liv, Flora, and Megan all feel compelled to engage with scholarly consensus and to bring scholarly voices to the greater public through ongoing collaboration with their colleagues in academia. Given the intention of this conversation – that is, fostering collaboration between the academy and public humanists working outside of it – the most important point on this theme was raised by Megan, who helpfully reminds us all that there is no shortage of information on the ancient world, nor of people eager to learn about it.

Liv Albert's podcast, *Let's Talk About Myths, Baby!*, can be found on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, all podcast players, or through her website, https://www.mythsbaby.com. The podcast is also available on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/c/MythsBabyPodcast. She is on Twitter/X and Instagram under the handle @mythsbaby.

Flora Kirk's portfolio can be found at flarohillustration.com. She is on Twitter/X, Bluesky, Instagram, TikTok, and Patreon under the handle @flaroh. She also has a page on Facebook, Flaroh Illustration.

Megan Lewis' *Digital Hammurabi* videos can be found at http://youtube.com/digitalhammurabi. She is also on Twitter/X @digi_hammurabi, Instagram @digital_hammurabi, and TikTok @digitalhammurabi.

Notes

1 See Higgins et al., this volume.
2 Peopling the Past is a digital humanities initiative that hosts free, open-access resources for teaching and learning about real people in the ancient world and the people who study them (https://peoplingthepast.com). See the Introduction of this volume, for more information about this colloquium. See Johnston et al., this volume, for their contribution to building pedagogically informed teaching resources.
3 All statistics cited in this interview for the follower counts of each interviewee were gathered in Spring 2024.

INDEX

3D technologies 179
3D-printed objects 167–168; Ancient World in 3D Project learning modules 171–178; and cultural heritage 170–171
1855 Treaty of Detroit 100
1893 World's Columbian Exposition (Chicago) 37

AALS *see* American Association of Law Schools
abandonment 269
Abudction of Europa 209
Academy of Fine Arts, Chile 18 243
Acadia University 242
accidental refugees 203
Active Learning 168
Adobe Photoshop 206, 208, 224n52
Adopt a Monument programme 251–252
affirmative action 132, 136, 143n37, 143n60
African art 34–36, 46–47; gallery layouts of 39–41; interdisciplinarity 43–44; rethinking of displays 42–43; transdisciplinarity 44–46
African Red Slip pottery 40
Alaminos 253–256, 269
Alaminos Medieval Tower House, QR codes 259
AME *see* Area of Mediation and Education
American Academy for Religion 278
American Association of Law Schools (AALS) and Critical Legal Studies (CLS) 130
American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) 84
ancient African collections 34–36, 46–47; display of cultural histories in new contexts 41–42; gallery layouts 39–41; interdisciplinarity 43–44; rethinking of displays 42–43; transdisciplinarity 44–46
ancient history learning, Peopling the Past project 114–118
Ancient Mediterranean studies 2–4; Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) 137–141; challenges of teaching 109–111; demographics 132–135; *see also* Classics
Ancient Mediterranean, Wikipedia 233–236
Ancient Nubia 47n8
Ancient World in 3D Project 167–169; learning modules 171–178; worksheet 1 197–199; worksheet 2 200
Antakya, Türkiye 201–204
Antioch Recovery Project (ARP) 221–222; background of 206–209; mapping Antioch 210–216; visualisation through digital reconstruction 216–221
antiquities trade, Ancient World in 3D Project learning modules 174–175
antiquities trafficking network 96

"Apollo Belvedere" 21, 23, 26–27
ΑρχαιοΛογικά programme 267
Arab spring 63
ArcGIS 206, 223n38; StoryMaps 208, 210
ArcGIS Online 211–212
Arch of Triumph 61, 170, 182n49
archaeological collecting 83
archaeological surveys in contested valleys 253–256
archaeology, and well-being 263–264
Archaeology Days 256–258, 260, 265, 269
archaeology-based well-being interventions (AWIs) 263, 269
Area of Mediation and Education (AME), National Museum of Fine Arts (MNBA), Chile 19–21
ARP *see* Antioch Recovery Project
Art Gallery of Ontario 50n44
Art Institute of Chicago 50n58
ARTEMIS-16 programme 263
Artstor/JSTOR 211
Atlantic slavery 80
audiences 313, 317; reaching outside of the academy 314–315
audio materials 115–116
Augmented Reality (AR) exhibition 256; UnSaLa-CY app 258
"Aula y Museo" 25–27
autochthony 75
AWIs *see* archaeology-based well-being interventions

Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) 203, 205–206, 216, 222–223n11
Bamiyan Buddhas 170
Bard Graduate Center 50n44
Bay View Association (BVA) 93; mummified child 96–101
Bay View Missionary Institute 101
bias, Wikipedia 233–234
bidirectional communication 149
BIPOC Feature series 137–140
BIPOC *see* Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour
Black art 79
Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) 130, 133–135, 137, 141; *Notes from the Apotheke* 135–136
Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement 129
Black sovereignty 78–81
Black Venus 79–80
Black women 78–79
"Black-Centered Resources for Ancient Mediterranean Studies" 134
blogs, Peopling the Past project 114–115, 117–118
BMA *see* Baltimore Museum of Art
British Museum, Parthenon marbles 81
Brooklyn Museum (BkM) 50n44, 50n58; *Africa in Antiquity: The Arts of Ancient Nubia and the Sudan* 41
BVA *see* Bay View Association

CAAS *see* Classical Association of Atlantic States
Cambridge Core 247n43
canons, political role of 180n8
capitalist realism 302n18
"Caravaggio en Chile: Luz del Barroco" (Caravaggio in Chile: Light of the Baroque) 21–22
care work 110
Carter, Howard 38
Carthage, African Red Slip pottery 40
ceramic sherds 41–42
challenges of ancient Mediterranean studies, teaching 109–111
Chile: Academy of Fine Arts 18; building nations through museums 18–21; "Estallido Social" (social outburst) 17; Greco-Roman objects 16–17; Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC) 15; Museum of Copies 21–22; Museum of Fine Arts 18; National Museum of Fine Arts (MNBA) 15; Palace of Fine Arts 18; Parque Forestal 19; Round Table of Santiago 17, 20, 28
Christian Art Index 202
Christians, mission schools 97–99
civilisational world heritage 1–2
classical Arabic 63–64
Classical Association of Atlantic States (CAAS) 132
Classical Greece and Rome WikiProject 233, 235, 241, 245–246n19
Classicism 74
Classics 74, 76–78; futurity 78–81; race 78–81; sovereignty 78–81
Cleopatra 233–234
Cleveland Museum of Art 50n44, 205
CLS *see* critical legal studies
codebooks 262, 270n33
cognition 113
cognitive apprenticeship 181n27
Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning 113
collaboration: community collaboration 84–85; museum visits as, Chile 22–25; teaching as 25–27

collection surveys 39
collective pathology 110
colonial dispossession 83
colonial imaginaries 80
colonial Othering 61, 76
colonial violence 76
colonialism 74; settler-colonialism, MENA 62–64
coloniality 17, 58–60; Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 67–69
coloniality of knowledge 17
columbusing 77
commodification 302n13
communication 251
communities of difference 291
communities of practice 114, 122n45, 168
community archaeology 252, 270n15
community collaboration 84–85
community programs, support of 267
community-centred efforts, learning from 76–77
Conner, Harriet 93–101, 104n36
consent of research participants 65–66
constructivism 111, 121n25, 168
content gaps, Wikipedia 239–240
content signposting 116
Continuum of Media Richness 113
"Copias y Citas" (Copies and Citations) 21–22
copies of artwork: Chile 16–19; ethics of digital capture and reproduction 170; National Museum of Fine Arts (MNBA) 21–22; *see also* Museum of Copies
Cortes, Gloria 19, 27
counter-storytelling 130, 139
COVID-19 lockdowns/pandemic 210, 215; Lux Project 155–156
Cowley County Historical Society Museum 104n36
Creative Commons Share-Alike License 115
Crenshaw, Kimberlé 130–131
Critical Indigenous Theory 94
critical legal studies (CLS) 130
critical race theory (CRT) 129–132; hidden curriculum 136–137
critique 293–294
crowdsourcing 85
CRT *see* critical race theory
cultural heritage 184n89; and digital reproductions 170–171
cultural histories, displays of African collections 41–42
cultural politics 181n36
Currelly, Charles Trick 150, 162n13
Cycladic figurines 172, 174–176
Cyprus 253, 256; public participation 260–263; stakeholder analysis 264–268

data fetishism 293
data sharing 84
databases: Database of Religious History 275–284; Digital Mary Project 294–301
decolonial materialism 83–84
decoloniality 50n49
decolonisation 75–76
deep learning 111, 121n30, 169
DEI *see* diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives
democratisation 296
demographics, Ancient Mediterranean studies 132–135
density 94
descendent community perspectives 170
dialogue 23; social transformation 20
digital capture, ethics 170
digital counter practice, Digital Mary Project 298–301
digital divides 182n56
Digital Hammurabi YouTube channel 308, 311, 314, 318
digital humanities 290; Database of Religious History (DRH) 275–286; Digital Mary Project 281, 284, 290–291, 294–301; diversity 302n7; and neoliberalism 291–294
Digital Humanities Innovation Lab, Simon Fraser University 294
digital manipulation tools 224n52
Digital Mary Project 281, 284, 290–291, 294–301
digital media 179
digital reconstruction, visualisation through 216–221
digital reproductions 177, 182n47; and cultural heritage 170–171
digital undercommons 291
digital visualisation of mosaic fragments 220
display of human remains 82–83; Egyptian human remains 95–96
diversity 10n20; in ancient Mediterranean studies 110; digital humanities 302n7
diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives 129, 133–134
DRH *see* Database of Religious History
Durham University, Egyptian Heart Scarab 173

EDI *see* equity, diversity, and inclusion
EES *see* Egypt Exploration Society
Egypt 35–38, 63; material culture and heritage 82; mission schools 97–99; mummified child 99–101; provenancing 97–99; slavery 103–104n32
Egypt Exploration Fund 150
Egypt Exploration Society (EES) 150
Egyptian amulets 83–84
Egyptian collections 36–39
Egyptomania 34–38, 98
"El Jugador de palin" (Plaza) 24
"Entre: Ejercicios de Apropiación Visual" (In Between: Exercises in Visual Appropriation), 21–22
epistemicide 173
equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) 268
"Estallido Social" (social outburst), Chile 15, 17
ethics of digital capture and reproduction 170
ethnography 83
Eurocentrism 2, 74; violence 59
European Huntington Association Conference 269
European Regional Development Fund 256
Executive Order "Making Federal Buildings Beautiful Again" 132
exhibitionary complex 38
exhibitions: *Africa in Antiquity: The Arts of Ancient Nubia and the Sudan* (1978) 41; *Ancient Nubia* (1995) 41; *Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time: Art, Culture, and Exchange across Medieval Saharan Africa* 41–42; *Entre: Ejercicios de Apropiación Visual* (In Between: Exercises in Visual Appropriation) 21–22; *Hearts of Our People* 79; "Monica Bengoa: Tentativa de Inventario" (Attempt at an Inventory) 25–27; *Nubia: Egypt's Rival in Africa* 41; "Street in Cairo" 37; "Survey Memories" 259; "Transitos" (Transits) (Cortés) 19, 24, 27
experiential learning 168–169

fact-oriented learning 181n40
feminist theory 121n23
Finding Ceremony (Monteiro) 85
Fink, L. Dee 111–112, 169
Flaroh illustrations 309–310, 318
folklorama 163n33
Fourth Cyprus Archaeological, Ethnographic and Historical Documentary Film Festival 259
Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro convention) 251
futurity 78–81

gallery layouts 49n36; of ancient African collections 39–41
Gardiner Museum 50n44
gender gap, Wikipedia 233–234
GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Programme) 224n52
Google Analytics 282
Google Maps 211
"Grad Student Features," Peopling the Past project 117
Graeco-Roman antiquity 204, 215
graffiti, National Museum of Fine Arts (MNBA) 16
Grand Rapids and Indiana (GR&I) Railroad 100
Greco-Roman copies 17; antiquity 132; Chile 16–17, 21
Greek art 115–116
Greek-Cypriot community 253–256, 268
group learning 169

Hadrian's Wall 316
Hall of Philia 217–220
Hatay Archaeological Museum 211
hermeneutical epistemic injustice 204
Hetherington Collection 148; history of 150–152; Lux Project 152–158
hidden curriculum series 136–137
hooks, bell 181n35
human remains, displaying 82–83, 95–96
Huntington's disease (HD) community 264

impressions of Wiki Education assignments 242–244
Indianapolis Museum of Art 50n44
indigeneity 75, 77
Indigenisation 75–76
Indigenizing 74
Indigenous art 79
Indigenous communities, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 63–64
Indigenous environmental studies 75
indigenous knowledge 45
Indigenous peoples 81
Indigenous perspectives 81
Indigenous public discourse 65; recognition of rights and positionality 66–68; rematriation and ways of being,

seeing, and doing 68–69; respect of self-determination and consent 65–66
Indigenous rights 62
Indigenous sovereignty 78–81
Indigenous Studies 75–77
Indigenous women 78
information processing 181n22
injustice, repairing 84–85
interdisciplinarity, ancient African collections 43–44
interest convergence, critical race theory (CRT) 131
intersectional biography 36, 40
intersectionality 131

Johns Hopkins University (JHU) 206, 223n38

Kelsey Museum of Archaeology 95; mummified child 96–102; *Nubia: Egypt's Rival in Africa* 41
knowledge barriers, Wikipedia 240–241
knowledge mobilization 162n7
knowledge production 59, 299; Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 64
Kophinou 253–256, 269; Kofinou 260

Land Back efforts, Michigan 101–102
Last Week Tonight 184n90
learning 6–7, 168; experiential learning 168; group learning 169; Peopling the Past project 114–118; *see also* significant learning
learning goals 169
learning modules, Ancient World in 3D Project 171–178
legacy data 49n34
lesson modules, teaching with replicas 192–196
Let's Talk About Myths, Baby! 308–309, 311–313, 318
Lingit (Tlingit) Nation 171, 177–179
Linking Community and Well-being in the Mediterranean project (LOGGIA) 263–264
Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians 99, 102
LOGGIA *see* Linking Community and Well-being in the Mediterranean project
looting, Ancient World in 3D Project learning modules 174–175
Lux Project 148–149, 152–158; local outreach 158–161; student responses to working with 161

mapping Antioch 210–216
Marian religious iconography 295
media richness 112–114; *see also* Peopling the Past project
mediation, National Museum of Fine Arts (MNBA), Chile 22–25
Mediterranean antiquities 153
memory learning 181n40, 269
MENA *see* Middle East and North Africa
metanarratives 110
Methodists, Michigan 99–100
methodology 93–96
Metropolitan Museum of Art 50n58
Michigan: Land Back efforts 101; provenancing 99–101
Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 57–60, 69n1; classical Arabic 63–64; Indigenous public discourse 65–69; recognition of rights and positionality 66–68; settler-colonialism 62–64
Minneapolis Institute of Art, *Hearts of Our People* 79
mission schools, Egypt 97–99
"Mónica Bengoa: Tentativa de Inventario" (Attempt at an Inventory) 25–27
mosaic floors 201–204
mosaic fragments 207; *see also* Antioch Recovery Project
multimedia 112–114, 121n39
multimodality 111–114, 121n40
multivocality 111–114, 120n6
mummified child (Kelsey Museum) 95–102
Mummy Museum *see* Kelsey Museum of Archaeology
Musees Nationaux de France 203
museum holdings, ethics and history of learning module 172–173
Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC), Chile 15
Museum of Copies, Chile 19, 21–22, 29n7
Museum of Fine Arts, Chile 18
Museum of Fine Arts Boston (MFAB) 48n13, 50n58; *Ancient Nubia* (1995) 41
Museum of Modern Art 50n44
museum visits as collaboration 22–25
museums 4–6; American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) 84; Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) 203, 205–206, 216, 222–223n11; British Museum 81; Brooklyn Museum *see* Brooklyn Museum; building nations 18–21; colonial Othering 76; Cowley County Historical Society Museum 104n36;

Hatay Archaeological Museum 211; Kelsey Museum of Archaeology *see* Kelsey Museum of Archaeology; Metropolitan Museum of Art 50n58; Musees Nationaux de France 203; Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC) 15; Museum of Copies 19, 21–22, 29n7; Museum of Fine Arts 18; Museum of Fine Arts Boston (MFAB) 41, 48n13, 50n58; Museum of Modern Art 50n44; National Museum of Fine Arts *see* National Museum of Fine Arts; Nelson-Atkins Museum 50n44; Neuberger Museum of Art 50n44; Newark Museum 50n44, 50n45; Pitt Rivers Museum 83–84; Royal Ontario Museum 50n45, 150
mutuality 149; public scholarship 158–159; Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History 171, 177

National Hellenic Research Foundation 294
National Museum of Fine Arts (MNBA), Chile 15; "Apollo Belvedere" 21; Area of Mediation and Education (AME) 19–21; "Aula y Museo" 25–27; copies of artwork 19; "Entre: Ejercicios de Apropiación Visual" (In Between: Exercises in Visual Appropriation) 21–22; graffiti 16; main hall 20; mediation 22–25; Patio de la Paulonia 27
nations, building through museums 18–21
Native American women 79
NEARCH *see* New Scenarios for a Community-Involved Archaeology project
Nefertiti 172, 177–178
Nelson-Atkins Museum 50n44
neoliberalism, and digital humanities 291–294
Neuberger Museum of Art 50n44
New Scenarios for a Community-Involved Archaeology project 260, 270n29
Newark Museum 50n44, 50n45
Notes from the Apotheke 130, 135–136, 141
Nubia 35, 37–38
Nubia: Egypt's Rival in Africa 41
Nubian collections 36–39

object biographies 47n2
object-based learning 167–169
Odawa community 99–100
Ojibwe community 99–100
open access Database of Religious History (DRH) 275–286
Open-Access 9n2
open-source database, Digital Mary Project 294–301
orientalism 37
"othered" 36
othering 59; colonial Othering 61

Palace of Fine Arts, Chile 18
papyri 83
Papyri.info, Papyrological Editor 169
Parthenon 9n5, 81
Patreon 312
pedagogy 20; experiential learning 168–169
Pennsylvania Museum 48n13
Peopling the Past project 110–111, 118–119, 318n2; ancient history learning 114–118
phenomenology 118
Photoshop 206
Pitt Rivers Museum, Egyptian amulets 83–84
podcasts: *Let's Talk About Myths, Baby!* 308–309, 311–312, 318; Peopling the Past project 115–116
popularity, Wikipedia 233–234, 236
positionality, recognition of 66–68
postcolonial provenance research 93
postcolonial theory 183n69
power regimes 102n5
predominantly White institutions (PWIs), recruitment 131
"Presenting the Past: Responsible Engagement and Mediterranean History" 307–308
primitivism 34–35
Princeton Archive 209, 214, 218
Princeton University 203
property 92–93; whiteness 131
property regimes 102n3
provenance 92; methodology 93–96
provenance narratives 92
provenancing: Egyptian context 97–99; Michigan context 99–101; mummified child (Kelsey Museum) 96–102
public participation 251; Cyprus 260–263; stakeholder analysis 264–268
public scholars, Wiki Education 240–241
public scholarship 77, 149; Lux Project 152–158; mutuality 158–159
PWIs *see* predominantly White institutions

race: Classical Studies 78–81; repatriation 81
racism 131; of missionaries 98; *see also* critical race theory
reactions to Wiki Education assignments 242–244
reclamation 81–84
recognition of rights and positionality, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 66–68
recruitment, predominantly White institutions (PWIs) 131
re-evaluation of exhibitions 39–40
rematriation, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 68–69
repairing injustice 84–85
repatriation 81–84, 184n89, 184n90; Ancient World in 3D Project learning modules 175–178; Lux Project 153
replicas, teaching with, module plan 192–196
representation 138
reproductions *see* replicas; 3D-printed objects
Res Difficiles: A Conference on Challenges and Pathways for Addressing Inequality in Classics 133
Research and Innovation Foundation 256
respect of self-determination and consent, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 65–66
responsible scholarship 3
restitution, Ancient World in 3D Project learning modules 175–178
rethinking of displays, ancient African collections 42–43
rich-format media 112–114
Rosetta Stone 82, 163n26
Round Table of Santiago, Chile 17, 20, 28
Royal Ontario Museum 50n45, 150

SAA *see* Society for American Archaeology
Santiago Declaration (Declaracion de Santiago de Chile) 17
Sappho papyrus 83
Savoy-Sarr African Collections repatriation report 61
SCS *see* Society for Classical Studies
self-determination 79–80
sensitive data sharing 84
sensory reception 112
SeSaLaC project *see* Settled and Sacred Landscapes of Cyprus project (SeSaLaC)
Settled and Sacred Landscapes of Cyprus project (SeSaLaC) 253–257; stakeholder analysis 266–267
settler-colonialism, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 62–64
sexism 131
shabtis 156–158, 163n31
significant learning 111–112, 169
Simon Fraser University, Digital Humanities Innovation Lab 294
simulation tools 113
slavery 80; Egypt 103–104n32
slow looking 23, 25
Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History 171, 177
social disintegration 293
social justice 3; art education 20
social learning 156
Society for American Archaeology (SAA) 132
Society for Classical Studies (SCS) 132
sovereignty, Classical Studies 78–81
spectacle 85
stakeholder analysis, Cyprus 264–268
StoryMaps 206, 208, 210
structurally prejudiced 204
surveys, on public participation 260–263
sustainable museology 27–29
Syria 201–202

Tang, GVGK 75, 77, 86
Tate Modern 50n44
taxonomy of significant learning 112, 171
teaching 6–7; challenges of ancient Mediterranean studies 109–111; as collaboration 25–27; cultural heritage with digital reproductions 170–171; multimodality 111–114; multivocality 111–114; with replicas, lesson modules 192–196
techno-corporations 293
techno-utopianism 293, 297
tradition-based 47n9
transdisciplinarity, ancient African collections 44–46
"Transitos" (Transits) (Cortés) 19, 24, 27
Turkish-Cypriot community 253–256, 268
Türkiye 201; *see also* Antakya, Türkiye
Tutankhamun's tomb 38

UBC *see* University of British Columbia
UEQ-S *see* User Experience Questionnaire-Short Version
undergraduate students, Lux Project 158–161
United Kingdom, community archaeology 252–253
United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples Rights (UNDIPR) 62
United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA) 97–99
universal knowledge 59
Universidad Catolica de Santo Tomas de Villanueva (St. Thomas of Villanova) 212, 214
University of British Columbia (UBC), Database of Religious History (DRH) 275–281
University of Chile, Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC) 15
University of Michigan Museum of Art 50n44
University of Winnipeg: Lux Project 148, 152–158; public scholarship 158–159; Roman Britain class 242–243
"Unknown Peoples" series, Peopling the Past project 117–118
Unlocking the Sacred Landscapes of Cyprus (UnSaLa-CY) 256–260, 267–268
UnSaLa-CY app 256–264
UPCNA *see* United Presbyterian Church of North America
User Experience Questionnaire 260

values-based significant learning 169–170
videos, Peopling the Past project 116–117
"Villa Nova College, Havana" 212
Villanova 214–215
violence: colonial violence 76; Eurocentrism 59
Virgin Mary, Digital Mary Project 294–301
visual sovereignty 79–80
visualisation tools 113; Database of Religious History (DRH) 281; through digital reconstruction 216–221

Waganakising Odawak community 99–100
ways of being, seeing, and doing, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 68–69
WCC *see* Women's Classical Caucus
well-being, and archaeology 263–264
Wesley College 150
"West" 76, 85
Western Civilisation 132, 167
Western Washington University (WWU), Ancient World in 3D Project 167–168
whiteness 79, 102n5; as property 131
Wiki Education 237, 246n29; assignments 232–233, 238–239, 242–244; public scholars 240–241
Wikimedia Commons 243
Wikimedia Foundation 232
Wikipedia 231–233, 244; Ancient Mediterranean 233–236; content gaps 239–240; in the university classroom 236–237
WikiProjects 233; Ancient Near East 246n20; Classical Greece and Rome WikiProject 233, 235, 241, 245–246n19
women: Black women 78–79; Indigenous women 78; Native American women 79
Women's Classical Caucus (WCC) 133
Worcester Art Museum 203, 205, 216
World's Fairs 36–37
WWU *see* Western Washington University

Xeros River valley 253; archaeological surveys in contested valleys 253–256; engaging multiple communities in a contested valley 256–260

Yale Art Gallery 50n44
YouTube channels 312; audiences 314–315; Digital Hammurabi YouTube channel 308, 312